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Notes of the Week

AMONG the almost devout utterances of mutual praise and thanksgiving with which Mr. Balfour, Lord Lee and the American Ambassador saluted one another at the Pilgrims' dinner, we observed no wreath or tribute for Lord Beatty and the naval staff who acted as advisers to the Delegation. We confess to finding a certain degree of comfort in this omission. Our readers are in no doubt as to our views on the Washington Conference, and while we are grateful to Mr. Balfour for his dignified representation of us, and aware of the great possibilities inherent in the occasion, we are not able yet to regard these proceedings as a matter for unlimited pride and congratulation. The settlements and schemes which are nowadays launched with such terrific acclamation throughout the Press and country are too often found floating bottom upwards a little while after. The absence of any acknowledgment to members of the Naval Mission is by no means an indication that they did not render their country a very signal service at Washington. It is conceivable that they tried to stem the tide of excited generosity and thought a little about their country and her future needs. That would be quite enough to account for the absence of laurels.

The American Ambassador made two extraordinary statements to which attention should be called. We should like to know how precisely he came to make them, and whether, apart from his incorrigible optimism, he can be said to have any real basis on which to found these assertions. First, he declared that "peace on the Pacific was assured for years to come, and probably for all time." "Probably for all time" is magnificent, but what authority has he, or any one else, for that matter, for saying so? Surely it is prophecy gone mad. Next he went on to affirm that when he said "assured," he spoke from "information whose exactness" was beyond question. But this was

going too far, even at a Pilgrims' dinner, and the information, it appeared, as he continued his remarks, was to the effect that the ratification of all the Washington treaties by the American Senate was as certain as their ratification by the British Parliament. It is likely that the treaties will be ratified by Parliament, but judging from published reports of the discussion proceeding in the Senate, there seems to be no certainty, whatever the probability, of their ratification by that body.

The Government took a bad toss on the Report stage of the Civil Service supplementary estimates. Mr. Hilton Young, under a heavy fire of criticism, was compelled to retreat from the positions occupied by him last week and consent to a postponement of the Vote. His arguments on the two occasions were entirely antithetic, which is quite in accordance with Coalition precedent. The two front benches succeeded in befogging each other's minds on the subject of Civil Service pension and bonus, and the public is left with a hazy impression that the civil servant is an even more expensive luxury in retirement than in office, that he costs the country more when pensioned than when paid.

The truth (which was not stated or not known by Mr. Hilton Young) is quite simple. No civil servant is now getting or can get a higher pension than his pre-war or any other salary. The only anomaly in the present pensions scheme is not that a proportion of the bonus is given with the pension, but that it is given to the pensioner for the rest of his life at a uniform figure on the false assumption that the cost of living will remain as high as when he retired. The argument of the Treasury that this anomaly is unavoidable because the Superannuation Acts base the pension on the whole of the "emoluments" enjoyed at the time of retirement is, of course, not conclusive, because nothing would have been easier than to have passed a one-clause Act excepting the bonus from the operation of those Acts, which now have the effect of penalizing the civil servant who sticks to his job at the expense of the man who does not. The concession now made by the Treasury, as a ransom for getting the Vote passed, will have the effect of allowing those who stampeded from the Service to retain their pensions on the anomalous scale. This is most unfair.

Incidentally, the Civil Service owes nothing to the very poor statement made by Mr. Hilton Young on behalf of the Treasury. Perhaps, however, little was to be expected of a second in command considering the attitude taken by his chief, Sir Robert Horne, in August last, when, in deference to the popular clamour about the Civil Service pay he threw the senior Civil Service officials to the wolves. Sir Robert claimed at the time the merit of having saved £500,000 on the current year's expenditure. What he really saved was a quarter of a million votes at the expense of sacrificing the support of a few hundreds of the "old contemptibles." His supplementary estimate of £450,000 to meet supplementary expenditure for superannuation shows that even this financial saving is illusory. He, in fact, has saved £500,000 on one year only to lose it for about



fifteen years annually in the future. We would make one further comment. If the front bench is too poor in courage (and gratitude) to acknowledge its debt to the men who have made their careers possible, it is a poor look-out for the front bench and the public service.

The outward marks of perplexity which the Prime Minister bears on his face reflect only too truly his uneasiness. It is comprehensible. A smashing defeat sustained by the Conservative candidate in the Clayton Division of Manchester on Saturday was followed by a victory for Labour in a Coalition-Unionist seat at North Camberwell, and in both cases the victors and the vanquished attributed their respective positions to the general disgust of the electors with the Coalition. The ill-advised and intemperate oration delivered by Lord Birkenhead a short while ago, in which he characterized the Labour Party as traitors and their leaders as "abject poltroons" may, of course, have contributed to the reaction amongst the electorate, but it does not entirely explain it. There are other and more potent forces working against the present Government. Not the least of them is the revival of interest in politics. This is strikingly illustrated in the case of Clayton, where about three-quarters of the electorate went to the poll. A growing disinclination in the country, which we welcome heartily, to allow the Coalition case to go by default is amongst the most disquieting of the evil omens to which the political soothsayers draw the attention of our unhappy Prime Minister.

Among the ill-advised ministerial allocutions for which the Lord Chancellor now so frequently makes himself responsible, none has been more infelicitous than his frigidly cynical apology for the delay in the House of Lords reform proposals. "Although some degree of harmony is gradually being evolved in the discussions regarding the form of the resolutions, the question continues to excite a considerable difference of opinion amongst those examining it. The period that will elapse before the resolutions are introduced will not be delayed, and I am very hopeful that it will be possible to present a measure of agreement not unacceptable to the House." It is not surprising that so raw a confession of Cabinet irresponsibility and ministerial disunion should have excited the laughter of Lord Birkenhead's peers, and although it arouses somewhat different emotions in ourselves we admit that frankness, even of so disingenuous a character, is disarming. The country, much to its credit, has only been disarmed by such methods because it has disdained the use of the only weapon which could effectively counter them. We would like Lord Birkenhead to understand this, and that it is only for this reason that the Coalition, amongst its other miracles, has been able temporarily to reverse an ancient maxim and stand even when disunited.

Another grave commentary on Cabinet disunion is provided by the series of questions asked of Ministers as to whether they intend issuing counter-proclamations to the Geddes Report. Their answers have been for the most part cynical, but the good-humoured and obsequious gentlemen of the House of Commons have shown by the merry spirit in which they greeted the replies that the Geddes Report may be still-born. But if there is one item in the Report which continues to excite controversy it is the educational proposals. Strangely enough, the hottest advocates of education have been expending all their ammunition on the question of free milk, free meals, medical and dental clinics, and other "educational" adjuncts. If their sincere cry is "Hands off Education" their best course would appear to be to advocate that these charitable services should be borne on the Ministry of Health vote. Meanwhile, any Member of Parliament who is anxious to attract public attention to his opposition to the suggested educational reforms might, with advantage,

ask the Minister whether the proposal to increase the number of pupils under each teacher to fifty would involve a countervailing expenditure by the Office of Works to reconstruct the school buildings far outweighing the economies to be achieved. The suggestion has been mooted, and we should be glad to ascertain the true position.

The whole situation regarding the Genoa Conference has been altered by the visit of Dr. Benes, the Czechoslovakian minister, to London in the past week. Dr. Benes, who has made himself as much of a European figure as Mr. Venizelos and Mr. Branting, more forcible because he is younger, more international in his outlook, and, because his political career is virtually post-war, less troubled with the prepossessions which affect all statesmen over middle age, has secured an important success. He has healed the breach, which it would have been foolish to pretend did not exist, between Mr. Lloyd George and M. Poincaré.

At their meeting this week-end, they are going to decide : (1) That the Genoa (or it may be Rome) Conference will take place about the end of next month; (2) that the States of the Small Entente and Poland, which is outside it, shall take part in the Conference, in its preliminaries and in its consequences; (3) that there shall be no discussion *at the Conference* (whatever M. Poincaré and Mr. Lloyd George may say to each other about it beforehand) about reparations; and (4) that the Russian question, which is essentially the question of whether the Soviet Government is to be recognized or not, shall be deferred until a subsidiary conference has dealt with economic questions. It may be, we think, taken as certain that one of the subjects of the Premiers' Conference will be the utilization of the League of Nations, not so much as at after Genoa, for the organization of whatever measures may be decided on by the Conference.

Lord Allenby has come and gone, and though no official statement is to be issued till next week of the proposals he carries back with him to Cairo, the papers have published what seems sufficiently authoritative information about them. It is said that Egypt is to be given independence at once, that a native Administration is to be formed immediately with its Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and that a Constituent National Assembly is to be convened forthwith. On the other hand we are told that the safeguarding of British interests is reserved for discussion, and that there is to be a sort of Monroe Doctrine, to be enforced by Britain and Egypt jointly, under which foreign Powers are to be excluded. There is some contradiction in these proposals, but we reserve detailed criticism till they are definitely before us. We may point out, however, that the establishment of an Egyptian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, with as a corollary Egyptian Legations throughout the world, opens up an enormous field for political intrigue which, in the circumstances, can be nothing else than anti-British.

Significant of the true state of India was the cancellation by the Prince of Wales of his visit to Aligarh, where he was to receive an honorary degree from the Mohammedan University, in the same way that he had received a similar honour from the Hindu University at Benares. If for the moment the situation in India generally may be said to be easier to some extent, at least on the surface, owing to Gandhi's suspension of his civil disobedience campaign, there is none who believes in his sincerity, and serious disturbances are still reported, particularly in Assam, where it is said that the credulous natives have been assured and verily believe that the British *raj* is at an end. The strike on the East Indian Railway is of the most sinister character, and may lead to very grave developments. In

these circumstances we regret to note a tendency on the part of some papers to relegate Indian news again to the background. Both the *Morning Post* and the *Daily Telegraph* continue, as for months past, to draw their readers' attention to the truth about India. We are glad to see that the *Times* no longer supports Mr. Montagu, and joins us in deplored that Lord Reading has not placed Gandhi under arrest.

On March 2 the London County Council elections will take place. The electorate numbers nearly 2,000,000 men and women and the municipal services performed affect four and a half millions of people very intimately. The three contesting parties are concentrating their propaganda round questions of Social Reform and all its multifarious activities. In the present financial position it is of course necessary that the party pledged to the most stringent economy shall be elected. On this ground the Municipal Reformers have the greatest claim on the suffrages of the electors, although the Progressives have a well thought out policy involving the reform of the Poor Law and the abolition of the Guardians. Moreover, there is a tacit understanding between these two great parties to oppose Labour, whose return to power would involve a most lavish expenditure of the ratepayers' money in the effort to produce a municipal millennium. The supporters of Labour will vote to a man. We hope that its opponents will awake from their apathy and take up the challenge.

Unwarrantable interferences and restrictions made by the London County Council are now matters of almost weekly occurrence. They remind us that the L.C.C. has grown to have an influence over the most private aspects of the lives of Londoners quite foreign to the purposes for which it is elected. The ratepayers suffer in more than their pockets, and it is not only with health and education and other communal services that their representatives are occupied. These gentlemen seem to spend a great deal of their time in the preparation of a moral code. At the last General Election only 16.6 per cent. of the electors troubled to record their votes. Unless they desire to become completely Prussianized they will do well to take a greater interest this time, and see to it that those members who have identified themselves with moral invigilation shall no longer be returned, and that those who are standing for the first time shall give specific guarantees that they will not interfere with the liberties of the people. The voters will do well to take precautions in regard to this question first and consider the respective programmes of the rival parties on their merits afterwards.

In answer to questions in the House, Mr. Lloyd George made it perfectly plain that the Government has no intention of giving a loan to Greece, and this is well. The amount that had been mentioned was no less than fifteen millions sterling. If a loan were granted, even for a much smaller sum, there would always be the suspicion, if not the certainty, that the money would be utilized by the Greeks for the prosecution of their war against the Turks. British interests, especially in the Middle East and India, are absolutely opposed to the continuance of that struggle, and it is most unfortunate that a settlement with Turkey taries—and from all appearances is likely to tarry for some time. Though Greece is not to be given a loan by the Government, she has applied for a loan under the Trade Facilities Act, and the Advisory Committee, set up by the Act, is considering the matter. The Prime Minister said that the Government was definitely pledged not to interfere with this Committee, and public opinion, therefore, should enforce on the Committee the principle that credits shall not be assigned to Greece if there is the least fear of their being used in further military adventure.

It is unfortunate, in the general interest as well as that of Italy herself, that no solution of the Italian political crisis has yet been reached. An attempt by Signor Bonomi to solve it failed signally on Friday of last week, and efforts to find a leader with a sufficient following have so far had no success. The vice of politics in Italy, as in Spain, is the excessive group system. The Chamber is split up into a number of groups, none of which has anything like adequate strength for the formation of a stable Government, nor is it easy to make such a combination of them as will ensure that highly desirable result. The Liberals, who now call themselves Democrats, have about 150 out of a total of 535 deputies; the next largest groups are the Socialist and the Popular or Catholic Parties, with 122 and 107 deputies respectively. The three groups supported Signor Bonomi, at least for some time, and his fall was brought about by the withdrawal of the Socialists. The Socialist Party is unwilling to co-operate with the Liberals and the Populists, and stigmatizes them as "bourgeois," and the problem is to reconcile their different points of view—a difficult business.

We have received from the British Empire Union a pamphlet exposing by documentary evidence the activities of Socialist and Proletarian Sunday Schools in this country. We have frequently had to complain of the apathy of the authorities towards the insidious campaign of the Communists, and here is ample proof of the danger of the situation. The organizers of these so-called Sunday Schools show considerable astuteness in their methods. They judge that the teaching of religion inculcates in the young an attitude of toleration in accordance with the spirit of Christianity, and in the hope that however hard their lot here, in another life all will be right. But that will never do, if they are to grow up into good revolutionaries, and so these Communist teachers preach instead a gospel of hate, describing religion as "part of the Class State" and as a myth designed by capitalists to placate the poor. They have even devised a form of baptism and written Hymns of Hate. They teach their children a doctrine of ferocity, and write in magazines "for the girls and boys" stories of rape, seduction and murder.

Taught these dangerous heresies at an impressionable age and before they are old enough to discriminate between truth and lies, members of these schools must absorb much of them as fact, and will no doubt act upon them when they come to years of indiscretion. The Communist organization as a whole, and their Sunday Schools in particular, constitute a danger to the future generations of the country which the present generation cannot afford to ignore. Every allegation is fully substantiated in the B.E.U.'s pamphlet, which contains a great deal more of a similar kind. Mr. J. H. Thomas in a recent speech promised the public full particulars of the subsidizing of revolutionary propaganda from foreign sources. We hope he will fulfil his promise promptly and that the Home Office will then take swift and decisive action.

By a freak of misfortune the disaster to the *Roma* airship in America very closely resembled both in cause and effect the destruction of R.38 last August, and formed a dismal corroboration of a note in the SATURDAY REVIEW following that earlier calamity. We wrote then of the need for a non-inflammable gas—in this instance removed from the *Roma* on account of its scarceness—and of the uncertainty of the whole science of lighter-than-air flying, due to faults of design rather than construction. If we may accept statements in the Press regarding the Air Ministry's Report on the loss of R.38, presented recently but yet to be published, our remarks are therein still further justified. We asked then how far the Admiralty in designing the airship had

drawn on the experimental knowledge of enterprising and efficient private firms such as Vickers's, Armstrong's, and Beardmore's. We await with interest the full publication of the Report, but we say now that the system whereby the designers act as their own inspectors is certain to lead to trouble. And this accident, and that to the *Roma*, only emphasize the need for continued research, which is not possible without Government aid to private firms.

One of the most stirring stories in the history of journalism is that of the newspaper *La Libre Belgique*, of which the first number appeared in Brussels on New Year's Day, 1915. The German authorities, needless to say, did their very best to suppress it, but without success, and this gallant little paper continued, until the day after the Armistice, to supply the inhabitants of Brussels with news (untainted by the German censorship) of the war and of the world. Even the feat of delivering the paper, under the very noses of the occupying troops, to the houses of its subscribers was accomplished. Naturally, owing to the conditions in which *La Libre Belgique* was produced, complete files of the paper are now very scarce. One such was sold some time since in New York for a thousand dollars, and this week we hear the report of another set fetching six hundred and eighty dollars. These are the only two complete files that have yet appeared in an auction room. The drop in price may have been due to the general waning of interest in war matters, but more probably it was merely caused by some inferiority in the condition of the second copy.

THE RATEPAYER'S BUDGET

THE Geddes Committee has exposed the very shallow Jesuitry of the Governments of the last twenty years by showing that the end has not justified the means, still less provided them. The simple fact about Social Reform is that it is not paying, never has paid, and never will pay. Its apostles have admitted this, but they claim that the benefits conferred cannot be measured in money. They believe that in some subtle and invisible manner the money spent fructifies in an abundant spiritual harvest. To them it has always seemed sinful even to suggest that there might be a leakage in the vessel which contained the seed and that much of it might be lost before and during the time of sowing. But even to such faithful men the Geddes Report has come as a revelation. It has demonstrated beyond all dispute that much more generous returns might be obtained for the same amount of expenditure. It matters not overmuch whether its suggestions are executed in detail. What is important is that for the first time the man who pays the money has been presented with a detailed exposition of the manner in which his money is spent. If he chooses to go on spending it unremuneratively it is, of course, his own business. Now the ratepayer, just like the taxpayer, must also be responsible in the end if he chooses to allow his money to be squandered with his eyes open. The trouble is that he is not spending it with his eyes open. Where it goes and why it goes is a mystery which it would take another Geddes Committee to reveal. We therefore suggest that the Government appoint a Commission of similar prestige and detachment to examine the whole system whereby money is expended in the municipalities. The terms of reference might be: To enquire into the control at present exercised over the expenditure of public funds by Local Authorities and to suggest amendments in the law necessary to meet deficiencies in this respect. Investigation would show that Local Authorities tried the policy of Social Reform and drove themselves to bankruptcy in the process ten years before the State arrived by the same road at the same destination.

This week, by the proximity of the London County Council elections, the national mind is directed towards the question of rates. So incontinently has Local

Government expenditure risen that it now amounts annually to rather more than the total sum raised by taxation for *national* purposes in 1914. Each family in the country is paying on the average about ten shillings per week, or twenty-five pounds a year, in rates. The burden is so obviously intolerable and so manifestly injurious to trade that unless the whole matter of local taxation and expenditure be comprehensively surveyed, the most serious consequences are bound to ensue. Seeing that both rates and taxes are derived from the same source, the national financial position can never be one of stability until local abuses are remedied. It is, indeed, because the average elector regards the taxes and the rates as separate and unrelated units that recent Governments have been enabled to adopt the easy though unsound method of paying for Social Reforms—for which they obtained electoral credit—with the money of the ratepayers. The result has been that an unbusinesslike—and what in any other connection would be called dishonest—means has been discovered of deceiving the taxpayer and vitiating both local and national finance. Upon this device, in so far as it touches the central Exchequer, the Geddes Committee has some severe criticisms to make. Again and again in dealing with the police, housing, education and those other services which are jointly supported by the taxpayer and the ratepayer, the Committee characterizes the "percentage grant system" as a "vicious principle." The Local Authorities are bribed by grants from the Exchequer to undertake duties which they would not otherwise assume; the taxpayer loses his control over the money spent; the spenders of the money have no encouragement to economy, and the nation is unaware what its total bill for various services may be. In setting out comparative figures the Committee makes the most striking revelations to those who had neither the means nor the leisure to work out the total cost of certain services. To such people the realization that the Budget figure of £60,000,000 in respect of education is only about 60 per cent. of the total bill will come as a surprise. Another £37,400,000 is spent on the same service by the localities. The same applies right the way through the eleemosynary services. Quite apart from any consideration of economy the average man would undoubtedly prefer to have a clean bill presented to him comprising the total cost of each service which he provides.

Having pointed out this grave anomaly the Geddes Committee stopped short. They were not called upon to go further. It is clearly in the national interest that some Committee should go further. Certain serious abuses which call for instant remedy occur to us at once. In the case of localities there is no parallel to ministerial responsibility; there is no Cabinet. In the case of the big Boroughs, which are the largest spending authorities in the whole country—larger than all the other self-governing bodies put together—there is not even a parallel to the Exchequer and Audit department; not even Treasury control. That which most approximates to Treasury control is the Borough Treasurer's Department, but it has no independency at all. The Borough Treasurer and the Finance Committee are responsible for finding whatever money they are called upon to find. Whereas, centrally, the duty devolves upon the Treasury to criticize any bill put before them, in the case of Local Authorities each Committee makes its own recommendations and the Borough Treasurer must find the money. The accounts are audited by the Local Auditor who is an officer elected by the preponderant party, having no power of disallowance or surcharge. Neither he nor any other person nor body of persons can pronounce an opinion as to whether a payment is in itself reasonable. The result is that with the Boroughs not only is there no equivalent of Exchequer control but there is not even the power of Local Government audit by the Ministry of Health, as in the case of other Local Authorities. The consequences of this evil financial system to the ratepayers are very serious. Their

remedies are confined to waiting for the next election, which takes time, or for an individual ratepayer to examine all the accounts personally and bring an action in the Courts of Law against his Borough for having incurred illegal expenditure. Neither of these methods supplies even a vestige of proper control. Again, what is completely lacking in the ratepayer's interest is any standard for current expenditure. The Town Councils all over the country work on entirely independent lines. There is no body of criticism and no department capable of criticizing the expenditure of one Borough on a particular service as compared with another on a similar service. There ought to be readily available for the electors a comparative statement of costs in the various Boroughs for services which they all have in common. It ought to be possible to do what Mr. John Burns once said he was going to do, to present a Budget for the localities as an annual appendix to the national Budget. At present the wildest discrepancies of expenditure prevail in the different Boroughs for identical objects. The ratepayer who has no ordinary means of having the essential facts before him cannot be expected to exercise a wise judgment at the elections. Is it then surprising that there should be such apathy in the local electorates? It is obviously desirable that interest in Local Government which preceded national Government and in which the public welfare is so intimately involved should be reawakened. It is worth the while of Parliament no less than of the Government seriously to remedy these anomalies. After all, rates are paid out of income and while these abuses continue the sources from which taxation can be derived are generously tapped *en route* to the national exchequer. It is hardly believable that we have reached the position when the sum levied in rates is equal to about 2s. on the income tax. When the accounts with the localities are put on a proper basis, when the facts are published to the people, the electors will see what their Social Reform is costing them, and judge whether it is worth while. To-day they do not know what it is costing them, still less do they know how much of what it is costing them is being wasted. Yet the localities set that example in Social Reform which the State has since copied and which it would never have copied had the facts and figures been available. This neo-Erastianism, which has brought such evil upon us, started in the municipalities and, deriving encouragement from its local successes, propagated its religion and its doctrine until it claimed the politician as the latest and most uncompromising convert to the notion that the State is the divinely appointed instrument of Social Reform. The time has come for the heresy to be exposed. Who could do it better than a body of outsiders, like the Geddes Committee, instructed to report on our local finance?

SINN FEIN OR FREE STATE?

IN the turbulent and obscure political situation which at present exists in southern Ireland, only two or three things are clear. The first is that as a result of the Treaty which was signed in Downing Street, we are dealing with a provisional Government which has received from the Lord Lieutenant access to the machinery of administration, and is undoubtedly trying to exercise its authority in the normal procedure of government. But it has been obliged to agree to a policy which prevents that authority for a period of three months from being ratified by the people in whose name it is exercised. The head of this provisional Government is Mr. Michael Collins, who was one of the signatories of the Peace Treaty. Another signatory to the treaty, Mr. Arthur Griffiths, who is not a member of the provisional Government, has been elected President of the Dail Eireann, and is referred to openly in speeches by other Irish leaders as President of the Irish Republic. Finally, there is Mr. de Valera, who, having been replaced as President by Mr. Griffiths, is

still apparently the leading spirit in the Ard Fheis, which is a convention of the members of Sinn Fein clubs and at its meeting in Dublin in the present week has in the interests of its own solidarity accepted resolutions which make the fulfilment of the Treaty in the spirit in which it was intended extremely difficult, and will certainly necessitate the amendment of the bill now before the House of Commons. Plainly, we are in the presence of a situation extraordinarily difficult to disentangle. Mr. Collins exercises the attributes of government and in the intervals of doing so has to defend himself and his policy in a convention which appears to claim the right to decide whether he shall continue to exercise them or not. Mr. de Valera, with an immense and indeed formidable loquacity, continues to make speeches which purport to offer acquiescence to any decision which may be come to by a vote, but which, in fact, seem carefully designed to bring Irish, or at any rate Sinn Fein, opinion back to the position before the treaty was signed at all. As for Mr. Arthur Griffiths, one can only imagine that he accepted the position of President, believing it to be the best way to maintain the authority of the delegation which he took to London until Irish public opinion should have an opportunity of expressing itself freely—an opportunity which he has now willingly permitted to be deferred. It is hard to imagine what other reason he could have had for assuming a position which does not exist, for instance, in the constitution of the Dominion of Canada. That is the constitution on which the Irish Free State is in the Treaty expressly said to be modelled; a position, which, if exercised in any real sense, would make nonsense of the whole settlement. What, therefore, is the British public to think? It is faced first with Mr. Collins, who appears to be both earnest and anxious to do what he can to maintain the authority which was rather hurriedly, and possibly unreasonably, put upon him, but who appears, especially in a matter such as the release of the kidnapped Ulstermen, to have to wheedle where he ought to command. We are then faced with Mr. Griffiths, who is in a position of a quite anomalous and indefinable kind; and lastly with Mr. de Valera, who, while holding no official rank in the Irish Government at all, seems to be exercising powers much larger than those generally at the disposal of the Leader of the Opposition in less adventurous countries.

Essentially, however, as the speeches at the Sinn Fein Conference this week make clear, the dilemma with which Ireland and ourselves are faced is of a simpler kind. The choice which the Irish nation has to face is not so much the choice between Mr. Collins and Mr. Griffiths on the one hand, and Mr. de Valera on the other, as the choice between representative government and government by the method which we have learned to call that of the Soviet, but which, of course, is much older than either Mr. Lenin or Mr. Trotsky. The same imputations of disloyalty to national ideals which were slanderously made against the late members of the Irish Nationalist party are now being openly made against Mr. Collins and his colleagues in the provisional Government. They would be made again if Mr. de Valera were in Mr. Collins's place, and they will go on being made as long as the ardent but uneducated young men and women who make up the Sinn Fein movement in Ireland remain unwilling to delegate the fulfilment of their national aspirations to any elected body of people. The choice for Ireland, in fact, at the moment is between Free State which represents, ill-defined though it is in the treaty, the normal processes of constitutional government, and Sinn Fein which, as all the world now knows, is the Irish for "ourselves," and which the proceedings of the convention show means "ourselves" in the strictest sense of the word, that is to say, not part of us but the whole of us. This inability to trust elected representatives which has been a feature of many political revolutions, and from time to time occurs in otherwise normal political parties (as in our own Labour party), ends inevitably in one of two

things : either anarchy or tyranny. It was announced the other day in the Press that the Moscow Soviet had elected Dr. Nansen as an honorary member, and one discovered with a faint sense of surprise that the Moscow Soviet was a body consisting of some thousands of people. Moscow, however, is not ruled by the Soviet but by Mr. Lenin in the Kremlin. The danger for Ireland is that if Sinn Fein clubs persist in making it impossible for a representative body to carry out the work of reconstructing the country on the lines of the treaty, they will find themselves confronted, if some resolute man should arise, not with self-government, but with an autocracy.

In the meantime we assume that the British Government will take cognizance of the altered situation created by the resolutions of the Sinn Fein clubs and that the bill now before Parliament will be amended to conform to it. And we would continue to counsel the public to maintain its determination to make the settlement work, however extreme the demands on its patience and optimism may be.

THE NEW BYRON LETTERS

By G. S. STREET

IT is a pity that this collection*, once the property of Byron's great friend, John Cam Hobhouse, and bequeathed by his daughter, Lady Dorchester, to Mr. Murray, could not have been published with the 'Letters and Journals.' That was a good many years ago, and many readers of the present two volumes may be unacquainted with the earlier six or with the letters in Moore's 'Life' and other books; they will not get from these a fair view either of Byron's mental powers or his character. They are extraordinarily interesting letters—sometimes painful, sometimes penetrating and witty, sometimes irresistible in a sort of buffooning fun peculiar to Byron, but interesting always. Yet they do not do him justice, as we know him from his letters as a whole. Those to Lady Melbourne are most intimately revealing, but only of Byron in his unhappy or deplorable love affairs and in his ill-omened courtship of his wife. And of those to Hobhouse and other men very few are so witty, so trenchant, so vivid as scores of letters to Hobhouse himself, to Murray and to Tom Moore already printed, nor do they show—it so happens—much of his sincere affection for his men friends, his interest in their affairs and achievements, and his active generosity towards them. His egotism and the vein of brutality and callousness in him stand out, therefore, with too little relief, as well as his licentiousness. Readers of these volumes only should hasten—as indeed we think they will for their own sakes—to read the others. They should also remember that at the end of Vol. I. Byron is only twenty-seven and that he died at thirty-six. Not that "boys will be boys" covers such faults as his, but since at his death he was clearly showing the world a better poised, saner and less selfish Byron, and since opinion of him at home (the badness of which always had an ill effect on his courses) was changing in his favour, it is reasonable to suppose that another thirty years of life might well have obliterated what was amiss in his early manhood. And now to the contents of the volumes before us.

After some early letters from Greece, jolly, high-spirited letters—"I am so out of spirits, and hopes, and humour, and pocket, and health," he says, "that you must bear with my merriment," but that is his way—and after some very sad ones, but with a characteristic twist in the sadness, over the death of his mother and his friend Matthews, we get to the correspondence with Lady Melbourne, which began in the year of his first triumphs, 1812, and ended with his exile in 1816. Lady Melbourne's son William Lamb, future Prime Minister and husband of Lady Caroline, was, according to Charles Greville, who mentions it as a matter of

* *Lord Byron's Correspondence*, chiefly with Lady Melbourne, Mr. Hobhouse, the Hon. Douglas Kinnaird and P. B. Shelley. Edited by John Murray. 2 vols. Murray. 25s. net.

common knowledge, really the son of the last Lord Egremont, and perhaps Lady Melbourne, though by forty years Byron's senior, was not the best possible mentor and guide for a young *roué*, but we gain from the fact that she was shocked by nothing or almost nothing. One element in this correspondence it is agreeable to get out of the way, since one has read far too much on the subject already. Lord Lovelace's 'Astarte,' as Mr. Murray says with truth, quite failed to show that the cause of Byron's separation from his wife was his relations with his half-sister Augusta, Mrs. Leigh, but it did seem to show that the scandal was well-founded and this correspondence seems to clinch the matter. It shows that Mr. Edgcumbe's theory that Mrs. Leigh was screening Mary Chaworth is untenable, and many dark hints, which seem certainly to refer to Augusta, are to be found in it. And one letter goes much further. It is dated April 30, 1814. In it he writes of "my A"—as distinguished from "your A," Annabella Milbanke—and declaring "by that God who made me for my own misery" that "she was not to blame, one thousandth part in comparison," goes on to say that "she was not aware of her own peril till it was too late," and so forth. That seems conclusive, and other passages almost equally so might be quoted, but one is glad to have done with that madness. . . . The Lady Caroline affair fills all too much of the letters. Sometimes Byron's exasperation is comic. "Good God! am I to be hunted from place to place like a Russian bear or Emperor?" and "I am sure since the days of the Dove in the Ark, no animal has had such a time of it as I—no rest anywhere,"—and Lady Caroline's forgery of his handwriting—a very clever forgery: a facsimile is given—is amusing, but one grows tired of the affair. It is painful, too, for only two people who had loved one another could so torture one another. The Webster affair reads like some old coarse comedy, but more wittily than most. The morality is shocking, no doubt, though Wedderburn Webster's boasts that he was free in pursuing his own amours because his wife was safe, might have provoked other unscrupulous young men than Byron into testing the matter. It is the telling—with great particularity—which reads unpleasantly. In the end Byron "spared" the lady and of course was in doubt afterwards if he had been a fool or a hero. With all this knowledge—and a great deal more—of her friend it is really odd that even so worldly a woman as Lady Melbourne wanted him for her niece. Byron himself hoped that Miss Milbanke would "govern" him, and probably he was a man who might have been governed, if he had had the luck to marry a woman who understood how to do it. But for Annabella Milbanke he had neither passion nor affection; that is quite clear from his coolly critical letters to her aunt on the eve of the marriage, though of course he professed a decent admiration. More probably it was only life, and not any woman, that could have reformed Byron—that life of action he was only just beginning when he died. The letters to Lady Melbourne end with the first volume, of which they form the greater part.

Byron's own letters from Switzerland and Italy and finally from Greece in Vol. II. merely supplement those we had already, telling us nothing new. We can "do with them," however—could do with a thousand more, for there are no other letters in English so full of life as his—and the reader who comes freshly to them will find a world of entertainment. The extraordinary household in Venice, the rages with printers, the curiously patient argument with his friends' criticism, varied by comic outbursts, the raillery of Hobhouse over his imprisonment in Newgate, the shrewd and lively comments on everything and everybody, all come to life again. It is even jolly to read again those emphatic requests for "calcined magnesia" and so on, with which he is always bothering Murray in the earlier volumes, and his fury with his lawyer Hanson, for coming to Venice without "my magnesia, my tooth powder." Those who, in the face of Byron's profuse

generosity, take his professions of avarice seriously will find fresh confirmation. Once more it is evident that the Guiccioli affair was not, at least on his side, the great romance of popular tradition, that he was rather coolly affectionate after the first passion was over.

She is a sort of Italian Caroline Lamb, except that she is much prettier and not so savage. But she has the same red-hot head, the same noble disdain of public opinion, with the superstructure of all that Italy can add to such natural dispositions.

Later on she did her best to prevent his going to Greece.

If she makes a scene (and she has a turn that way) we shall have another romance, and tales of ill usage, and abandonment, and Lady Carolling, Lady Byroning, and Glenarvoning, all cut and dry. There never was a man who gave up so much to women, and all I have gained by it has been the character of treating them harshly.

One woman, at least, he did treat harshly, and that brings us to Jane Clairmont, or Clare, and to Shelley. There are no letters from Byron to Shelley, but many from Shelley in these volumes, serious, gentle letters, with a touch of formality in them covering the warm and ingenuous spirit. His intense admiration for Byron appears once more and his modesty about himself :

You felt the strength to soar beyond the arrows; the eagle was soon lost in the light in which it was nourished; and the eyes of the aimers were blinded. As to me, I am, perhaps, morbidly indifferent to this sort of praise or blame; and this, perhaps, deprives me of an incitement to do what now I never shall do, i.e., write anything worth calling a poem.

The passage is strange (to us) and characteristic enough to quote in full. All this has a one-sided appearance, since there is hardly a mention of Shelley by Byron in those volumes, and we ought to remember the many tributes paid to the dead Shelley in letters to Murray and Moore, more especially that great one : "The best and least selfish man I ever knew; I never knew one who was not a beast in comparison." One needs to remember that, in truth, when one reads of Byron's conduct over the lies told by the Shelleys' servant about them and repeated by Hoppner—a matter which comes up again here. Mr. Edgcumbe shows—we have no space for the argument—that Byron can be acquitted of keeping back Mrs. Shelley's letter to Mrs. Hoppner, but nothing can excuse his failure to vindicate his friend. Yet Shelley, that divine creature, did excuse him, and lived in intimacy with him till his own death. Perhaps we do not know everything. There is little fresh in the letters from Greece, but one letter may well affect the reader as much as anything in the book, though it was written not by Byron but the prosaic Hobhouse, for the simple reason that it spoke of the affection and admiration of Byron's friends and might have cheered a dying man if it had come in time. It remains to add that Mr. Murray has done his editing well. His notes are few but enough, for he has a right to assume that anyone who wishes for more information can go to Lord Ernle's comprehensive notes in the 'Letters and Journals.' One or two mysteries—for example, one in Volume I, of a Mr. D. being called from his club to wake Byron up and "guessing but too correctly" why—seem to have defeated Mr. Murray as well as the present writer. He has to be congratulated on this last incident in the long connection of his family with Byron's genius.

WINTER SPORTS

BY E. B. OSBORN

THE Swiss winter resorts never attracted me at all. The elaborate Cresta run and the perfect ice-surfaces prepared on snow for curling (which are to water-borne ice what a modern billiard-table is to the tables of forty years ago) and the swept and garnished rinks worry me with a sense of vain artificiality. I want to enjoy my winter *au naturel*; not with the assistance of snow and ice architects in the pay of hotel-keepers. The same unreasonable idea, no doubt, was

working in the mind of Tartarin of Tarascon, when he conquered "greased-pole climbs" in the Alps without a guide, not out of sheer fool-hardiness, but because he believed that all the talk of danger was hotel-keeper's advertisement and that, in reality, there were eider-down mattresses at the bottom of each blue crevasse, to prevent the accidental loss of customers. It is not an impossible point of view. For I did once meet a party of Americans (from Scranton, Penn., or some such place) at Lake Louise in the Rockies, who believed that the view from the Châlet was painted canvas and props, which were taken down at the end of the tourist season. Too "cute" to be true, was the thought in their first concentrated glance—and I remember it and them all the better, for the girl and her accepted lover walked up and down in front of the Châlet for an hour, looking just like the symbol of the dollar (\$). I abhor thee, artificiality; especially in winter time when one expects to see the brute forces of Nature let out to prowl about and perhaps find a victim.

In Western Canada and, later on, in the Fens, I have found a more philosophic joy in winter sports than anybody possibly can at Davos or Moritz. There is, of course, no open-air skating to speak of during the Far-Western winters. The natives of the towns there run up sheltered rinks, in which you can only skate round and round like a squirrel in a cage. The ice on the lakes and rivers, even supposing it is not cumbered up with close-packed snow-dust, is useless to the speed-skater, for it soon becomes hard as marble and he cannot hold an edge on it. Only one soul-sufficing memory of open-air skating in the Far-West remains with me—the majestic booming, like the sound of a great bell, of the ice on a big lake north of the Saskatchewan, whither I had gone to catch a winter's supply of white fish. Snow-shoeing is supposed to be one of the most delightful winter diversions in Canada. It may be so in the East, where many companies of young men and maidens, gaily garbed like the old French *coureurs des bois*, travel on snow-shoes through the high-columned dusk of the woodlands at night to a club hut, where they sup and dance. But snow-shoeing in the West was for me a matter of endless marches after dog-trains, the constant danger of getting frozen in awkward places, and horrible aches resulting from the necessity of "mushing" with legs wide apart. Sleighing and tobogganning, however, were joyous diversions in both West and East, and the joy in retrospect inspired (if you will permit the term) rude rhymes, fragments of which still stick fast in remembrance. You must always have a girl companion, it is expected of you out there; and such copies of crude verse can be used over and over again as personal compliments. So I am not at all ashamed of my homely song of sleighing à deux which began :

Swiftly the trail winds in and out through banks of drifted snow;
Like crescent moons in wind-blown clouds our polished runners show.

The fox looks up from his lowly earth, the owl from his lofty tree
Looks down; o'erhead the snow-birds flit like thoughts of a maiden free.

Strange how the owls would sit, purblind and motionless, in the snow-laden pines, each a secret tower, in the brief winter's day out there, descending in the dusk to quarter the snows with the mellow reduplicated plaint that disturbs the sleep of the *moonias* (green) new arrival. The last stanza of the song was as follows :

With chiming bells and tossing manes our horses charge abreast
Under an arch of snow a-fame into the crimson West;
The gleaming grooves through glimmering snows in which we speed display
As many, many glittering stars as light the Milky Way.

The tobogganning song was a little better, I believe, but I can remember only the final stanza :

Now we glide on the level; with sweet lips apart
She leans to my shoulders and heart beats with heart,
(Like a rose in the dark is the heart of my sweet),
And the ice-bound deep river roars under our feet
Till we rock o'er a snow-drift and find a full stop.

* * * * *

Whoso climbs up that hill shall find wings at the top.

There was no upset, a joyous disaster, on that particular journey down the steep 700 ft. high bank of the North Saskatchewan river. In Western Canada, though, many a marriage is made in a snow-drift, for it is only in winter-time that men have leisure for love-making.

Ice-yachting, which gives a speed of as much as one hundred miles an hour, is another Transatlantic winter sport I have enjoyed in fear and trembling. Yet all those far-off delights hardly count to-day in comparison with the quiet pleasures of solitary skating in the Fens. But for the *sequelae* of influenza and pneumonia, I would have been at Littleport a few days ago with my treasured pair of long "Whittlesea runners," the like of which cannot be bought to-day for love or money. When you know the topography of Vermuyden's vast drainage system, with its broad "washes" or storage reservoirs, you can travel almost anywhere on patters through Fenland. It is best not to venture on the rivers unless the frost has been hard and enduring, and there are often chances of a wetting—e.g., the rotten ice so often met with under a sheltering bridge—which must be carefully avoided. The Fenlanders are a grim, unsympathetic race, with the Nor'easter in their souls, and the sight of a stranger struggling to the bank through splinters of ice, strikes them as a glorious stroke of the irony of circumstance. They have their milder jests; for example, if you have been travelling against a bitter-cold wind and your breath has turned to hoar-frost on your moustache, they greet you with the saying: "Here's a chap that's turned mouldy since he came out." But the sense of what the Russians call *prostoi*, of illimitable horizons and a spirit freed from conventions, is the abiding reward of a solitary skating holiday in the Fens. In the violet hour of evening when :

The last rose-petal of the sunset's rose
Falls in the outer West and faintly glows,
One thought of fire in a world of snows

you are your very own man again, and worry vanishes like a garment twitched away and blown nowhere by the keen, heartening wind your speed creates. There is not a sound in Nature save

The dulcet chime
Of steel on ice that measures out the time
And breaks the rhythmic silence as with rhyme.

The mystic which is in every man comes into his own, and you fall into a meditation, the harvest of which shall be gathered in later on.

YOUNG OXFORD AND OLD IBSEN

BY JAMES AGATE

JOURNEYING to Oxford I mused upon my unfitness for the job before me, upon my utter ignorance of our Universities. Cambridge town I had once threaded on a bicycle; it is, moreover, the station at which one changes for the March Horse Show. Oxford brought to mind a golf-course, or slough of despond, and a tennis-court of which the floor is so strangely coloured that, were the windows correctly placed, you would not be able to see the ball. Incidentally I recalled a grudge of my youth against the O.U.D.S. Like the gillie who deplored that fine days should be "nippit up by the Sawbath" was not I wont to regret that Max's pen should be diverted, even once in a while, from the modish panorama to the stuffy classics? To come back to my being "no scholar," I consoled myself that the play would at least be as little Greek to me as to these hatless, be-stockinged and be-muffled innocents lounging so elegantly against mediæval walls and giving the very streets an air. For the play promised was an Ibsen; I knew not which.

Suddenly I caught sight of the placarded announcement: "The New Theatre, Oxford. (By permission of The Vice-Chancellor and The Right Worshipful the Mayor). The Oxford University Dramatic Society presents 'The Pretenders' by Henrik Ibsen." I rubbed my eyes. What feudal times doth this old city still endure that its choice and master spirits must seek worshipful permission to rub intellects with their rightful kin? And then I reflected that perhaps young innocence was not so ingenuous as I had supposed. Had not its choice for this particular year's performance fallen upon 'The Pretenders' of all plays! Had it not "twigged" or "rumbled," or whatever the current idiom may be, that this is Ibsen's greatest essay on kingship, his most resolved exploration into the responsibilities of governance? It is his sternest, grimdest glorification of that hard condition, twin-born with greatness, which has irked so many self-centred rulers to no more than a gentle melancholy. "What infinite heart's-ease must kings neglect, that private men enjoy!" is a purely selfish lament. "Every one must go who is too dear to the King!" cries Haakon, banishing in a single self-immolatory swoop both mother and mistress. Here, in a nutshell, is the philosophy of kingship. Kings are to consider not how jolly a thing it is "to sit three steps above the floor," but how best they may fulfil their trustee-ship and serve the common kinghood. Ibsen blares this nineteenth-century thought through a thirteenth-century trumpet. Harald the Fairhaired conceived it better for Harald that Norway should have one king in place of a hundred. Haakon, in 'The Pretenders,' sees that it is better for Norway that she should be a "nation" instead of a "kingdom." It is the people who exist by divine right and not their kings. Immense play is made with the idea that a country which is only a kingdom is "a church which has not been consecrated." Earl Skule, who would have Haakon's place, owes his defeat to his failure to rise to the heights of the "great kingly thought" which he would usurp. His son, believing in the authenticity of his father's thought, breaks open the church and violates the shrine that Skule may be crowned king. This misfeasance works the wrong way; the superstitious soldiery defect. Whereupon Skule, in all humility, gives up the ghost. "A man may die for the sake of the life-work of another; but if he is to live, he must live for his own." And Haakon, who can trample the pride of rule under foot, goes forward to unwilling personal victory. "His body blocks my path." Dagfinn: "If Haakon is to go forward, it must be over Skule's body!" Haakon: "In God's name, then!"

It is not to be imagined that this *leit-motif* is easily disentangleable. Even at this early date Ibsen was busy at his baffling game of keeping two plots going, a ground-floor of bricks and mortar and a symbolical superstructure. Fail to get the hang of the upper storey and you may well think yourself in a lunatic asylum. Rosmer inviting Rebecca to throw herself into the mill-race "to show her confidence," Hedda handing Lövborg the pistol, Solness toppling off his steeple with Hilda crying "Bravo!"—people really don't do such things, and it takes all Ibsen's mature genius to persuade us that with an extra spiritual dimension this may be sanity. But at thirty-five he was not very clever at this sort of business. The ground-floor of 'The Pretenders,' with its story of changelings and intercepted letters, is as complicated as a play by Sardou or Scribe. It is also a great deal less lucid, with the result that in fumbling for the symbolical staircase you bark your shins against a good deal of downstairs mahogany. To make confusion worse confounded add the overpowering figure of Bishop Nicholas. In the early acts this character is all darkling imagination, inveterate misanthropy, pure Webster. It is only at the end of his tremendous dying that you in any way connect

him with the philosophical idea. Then is his malignancy declared to spring from innate inability to grasp that kind of power which Haakon despises and Skule cannot leave behind. This materially towering character pulls all the play's strings; it is only at the last that you perceive him to have a finger in the philosophic pie. You see how difficult all this makes the play. There is hardly any "furniture" in the later and avowedly symbolical dramas. Rosmer has a hat and stick, Hilda Wangel a kit-bag, and so on, but these are obvious imponderabilia. Whereas 'The Pretenders' makes enormous parade with trials by ordeal, armies in rout, the paraphernalia of prelacy, and panoplied death-beds such as actors love. Irving, I am inclined to think, would have done it all rapturously, cut out the symbolical nonsense and, throwing the play overboard, would have kept the terrible old man going to the end. Actually he dies half way through.

Unfortunately the O.U.D.S. did actually throw the play overboard, although for some reason which I could not determine. Either they were shy of probing as deeply as Ibsen into this matter of authority, or they hadn't quite grasped the inner purport of the play. What they did was to give a magnificent performance on the ground-floor, without giving you the least inkling of the garrets and attics of lofty thought upstairs. Ibsen, we are told, used the historical struggle between Haakon and Skule to mirror his own unwilling jealousy of his successful rival Björnson. We need not labour this theory too much. It fits, but then these things always do fit. Skule has the uneasy consciousness that the other's triumph is at once easy and deserved. Haakon possesses, as Bishop Nicholas puts it, "*ingenium*," or the quality which Lord Beaverbrook and Mr. Selfridge, following the Romans, insist upon as the true foundation of success. He is the favourite of fortune, the born leader, begetting thoughts greater than he understands, following a path of which he cannot see the end. Skule's jealousy does not prevent him from recognizing Haakon's great merits; it is in fact he who chiefly expounds them and, as jealous Ibsen's mouthpiece, does the bulk of the talking. In this great wilderness of a play much, perforce, must be cut, but to shear away such philosophic clues as Haakon has is to make nonsense of the play. Obviously Haakon has to have the "great kingly thought" before Skule can be jealous of it. Unfortunately his sacrifice of mother and mistress was cut and his reluctance from a personal victory minimized. Some of the critics, writing of the performance under their eyes, described Haakon as a man of physical courage only. This is to misunderstand the play. "Am I to think that the king is made of different stuff from me?" wails Skule. Of course he is; of different and better stuff. That's the whole point. Haakon is inclined to talk a bit tall, through his spiritual hat, as it were. Like all Ibsen's great men he is a bit of a braggart. His spiritual bragging silenced, Mr. E. L. Bush (Trin.) could perhaps do no other than play him like some stalwart, boasting for the dedans in the Oxford tennis-court. Unfortunately his intonations were too modern by many centuries. They would most admirably have fitted Captain Hawtree. Earl Skule was much nearer the Ibsen spirit. I do not know what Mr. A. H. Howland (Worc.) thought of the part, but he looked bothered throughout, which was exactly right. Mr. G. G. Edwards (Oriel) gave a finely modulated, subtle performance of the biggest red herring in all drama. The Bishop is a part which could be dumped into any play without damage. Like the speech from 'The Lady of Lyons' with which the fair-ground actor used to enliven 'Maria Martin,' it would fit anywhere. Miss Haidee Wright had a superb five minutes, and the whole was admirably staged by Mr. Bridges Adams. Yet I am afraid that the play, in all that seriously matters, missed fire. It seemed like an ineffectual attempt to re-write 'Macbeth.' But that is largely Ibsen's fault. He gives few clues and these clues were cut.

COLOUR*

By D. S. MACCOLL

"DRAWING," it has been said, "is the enemy of colour." There are reserves to be made, as the attempts to paint without definite form have proved; but it is true that drawing must sacrifice something of minute linear reticulation if colour is not to be strangled in the net. Let anyone wash-in the tint of a paved courtyard and then add over the wash the markings of the slabs, and he will need no further proof: what was bright has become dull. Mr. Muirhead Bone has been learning this lesson. In his earlier water-colours he made the mistake not only of excessive delineation, but of *painting* in colour over what was already painted with the point, in the sense of tone added to line. Now he either tints lightly over delineation; colours over a slight scaffolding of line, or colours without line. These last exercises are casual notes of coast line (from a steamer?); but the colour begins to be a valid element. Painting with the point, by the way, is the vice of most etching. The etcher, with his nose against the plate, produces an affair of scratches with blobs of inky tone. Hence most etchings are disagreeable objects on a wall, as soon as one gets a yard away from them, and it is only the collector's interest in them as objects of commerce, enhanced by the chicanery of "states", that accounts for their price compared with that of drawings. Let anyone test this at the exhibition of the Painter-Etchers. Mr. E. W. Charlton is one of the few who keep their lines sufficiently open to tell upon a wall; and Steinlen with a few broad sweeps of lithographic chalk makes havoc among the scratchings and blobbings.

Painting is drawing raised to a higher power when it includes the tone and the colour of forms as well as their delimitation: these three elements combined in the act of the brush constitute fully an object in space, and oil-paint is the natural and obedient vehicle for this rendering. If it is applied, by omitting tone, to the production of "poster" pictures, it is throwing away one of its powers, to do what can be better done by other instruments: if it is used with neglect and contempt of colour it commits suicide. That is what has happened in our schools: *felo de se* is the only possible verdict on most of the oil-painting produced: the pictures, non-existent as colour, have no reason-for-being as *paintings*. Delineation has been the enemy of colour; ardour and skill in delineation, excellent in themselves, have resulted in a temporary blindness. It may seem strange that its reason-for-being should go clean out of an art for a time: but it is not strange. All fine and difficult things have a precarious existence. There is only a handful of men in the world who understand the higher mathematics. If a bomb were to destroy them at a conference the bottom would be knocked out of science, which the rest of us take on trust. One of the fundamental arts, the French art of cookery, is threatened because hordes of English and American barbarians, in their motors, are imposing their low hotel-standard and introducing the vices of tea-swilling and five meals a day. So with colour, in its difficult but magical Occidental alliance with delineation and tone. It comes and goes; even the greatest hold it on an uncertain tenure; a Turner finds, and loses and finds it again.

The nineties were hot in pursuit. They looked to Manet, Whistler, Degas, who had reached a balance, and to Monet, who was unbalanced and colour-intoxicated like Renoir, Cézanne, Van Gogh in various degree. Then came discouragement and the morning after, the sober effort of our schools to recover delineation, of which the only master among the colourists had been Degas. Tone had already been receding; colour now

*Exhibitions referred to: Messrs. Muirhead Bone and John Wheatley at the Grosvenor Galleries; Painter-Etchers in Pall Mall; British School of Rome exhibition at Burlington House; Miss Ethel Sands and Mr. Mark Gertler at the Goupil Gallery; Mr. William Shackleton at the Leicester Galleries.

went by the board, or survived as a poor relation of drawing. Look at the competition pieces for the School of Rome. Drawing, up to a point, is common, and beyond that point promises, here and there, something uncommon. But there is a flicker of colour only in sketches and cartoons : in oil-paint it goes out. Yet a master of colour-values, Mr. Steer, teaches painting at the Slade. The trouble is that pupils in a school can only in part be guided from above : they take their enthusiasms from one another. The whole National Gallery with its Titians and the rest lies open, and they walk through it, but in blinkers : till it is whispered that So-and-So has been looking at Titian, no one sees him.

We are all, indeed, like that. Blinkers, gags, strait-waistcoats, manacles are on our perceptions, and are counted virtues : once, perhaps, they were. At our feet rivers move among rocks, above us sunrise dyes the clouds; but our feet trip and our eyes avoid. Even so the Londonderry religion and the other variety co-exist with the *Londonderry Air*, with that divine compunction and proud, inevitable progress. It is not to be hoped that more than a few should emerge from the school-stage and break through : but what ails us that with them too, drawing should so often become a squabble, and colour mud?

The light dies down and flickers, but never entirely goes out. Here, for example, is Miss Ethel Sands, with a true gift of colour, an angry-opal kind of colour, flashes of bitter scarlet and violet-blue upon a base of milky green. She loves her colours a little too fondly. They spill over on the canvas from interiors already brightly arranged as works of art : there is therefore the more need for those nameless mixtures, those transforming greys, that come about under the operation of shadow and air and make something new and different out of the fabrics and pots and flowers. In the best of the pieces there is a consideration of values; in others, like No. 42, there is none, and the result must be judged as a poster : in others yet there is confusion. The lady breakfasting in bed (No. 26) takes her distance and goes back into tone; but Miss Sands loves a vermillion splash too much to reduce that to its distance-equivalent, and the lady's sleeve therefore jumps out to join the other vermillion in the foreground. If I were called in, like a doctor, to prescribe, I should recommend a course of less hectic material to safeguard the gift.

Mr. Shackleton, again, is obviously sensitive to colour. He is permanently drunk with those glistering damp evenings when sundown and moonrise set up a conflagration of golden greens and golden rose, almost insufferably beautiful. Who is sufficient unto these things? And who, with his memories of what grim Yorkshire becomes under that light, will accept another's report? To me it seems that something essential has gone out of the vision in its transfer to the studio, something I found in a shorthand note of Brabazon as I left the gallery, ash-tones countering the rose. Easier, no doubt, for the sketcher on the spot to note the harmony, than for an artist with pre-occupations of allegory to elaborate. Mr. Shackleton may plead the authority of a particular kind of late Turner for his elaborations, but I wonder if that magic, if it is to be caught at all, must not be caught flying, and for its own desperate sake, without thought and words.

Mr. Gertler is one of the returned prodigals of painting. In his student days he showed a remarkable gift for realistic still-life rendering. Then he was caught up in a movement with which he had no natural affinity. He distorted and applied colour arbitrarily, and was applauded as a designer. That is the side on which he is weakest. Give him a plate of apples and he will pore over and render their roundness, the slippery light upon them, some charm of their colour. If he could extend this interest to larger relations he has the makings of a Dutch seventeenth-century still-life painter. But when he turns to other objects, like heads, the habit of polishing apples seems to persist; the forms are

rubbed over and rubbed down like pebbles; the best head is the one most like a pippin. But there is a real recovery of lost ground, and it may go farther yet.

Addenda.—I have to confess to an absurd slip in last week's article. What they call the sub-conscious took advantage of a writer befogged by a horrid chill, and when he hesitated for the familiar name of Vernon slipped in that of George Jones, the advisor of Vernon and of Chantrey : then woke me up in the watches of the night to display VERNON in letters of flame and grin at me.

Mr. Ainslie is still equating the sphere of æsthetic with art, instead of with beauty, which is only a part of a part of art. I suggested that the common condition of efficiency and beauty was rhythm, and that neither rhythm nor beauty is confined to the "useless" arts of delight, which alone Croce calls arts. The sense of beauty is of course unanalyzable into anything else, and is different in kind from the sense of efficiency.

Mr. McClure Hamilton is so flattering to my economic excursus that it is tempting to follow him into deeper waters; but I must only take up his point about the Van Dyck. "Pattern" is an unsatisfactory word; I meant it to stand shortly for design and balance of colour; I cannot feel that the mass of blue to the right is wrought into a design. The 'Blue Boy' is not one of Gainsborough's supreme works: but it has the unity of colour that is to be found in the 'Lady Southampton' of Van Dyck among the Lucas pictures.

AN OBSESSION OF BRITISH OPERA

By E. A. BAUGHAN

OUR composers have not made great reputations in opera. All kinds of reasons are given for this: we are not naturally a dramatic race (which is not true); there is no opening for British opera (a circular reason; for if our composers write no operas they cannot have an opening for them, and if there is no demand for British opera it naturally is not written), and, finally, there are no librettists. From my own experience I am inclined to place more weight on this last reason than on any of the others. If, as a composer, I desired to set an old Elizabethan play to music, I really should not know where to find my librettist. A particular play is in my mind. I should like to see Dekker's 'A Shoemaker's Holiday' made into a downright, merry British opera. If properly done it would be the equivalent of 'Die Meistersinger,' without that opera's rather tiresome and very German apotheosis of German art and German song. To find a young poet would not be difficult. Literature is as rich in poets as the spring is rich in the song of birds. But our poets are shy of the stage. They look on it as a cage in which they cannot sing, and in some ways it is. An opera libretto, from their point of view, is worse than an ordinary play in verse. All that the terrible composer requires is a sort of verse which is shorn of all the trappings of poetry. Moreover, there are all kinds of limitations as to the vowel sounds which are suitable for music, and the confined action of the stage and its realistic presentation would paralyze the free working of the poet's imagination. An ordinary man of the theatre, on the other hand, has no idea of the necessities of music. If he be British he will probably know nothing of the art. If you speak of opera to him he thinks with difficulty of 'Faust' or 'Cavalleria Rusticana.' Moreover, his idea of the verse necessary for music will be quite conventional. Probably, if commissioned to write an opera libretto, he himself would sketch out a scenario, herein-after to be known as "the book," and he would call a hack versifier to write the "lyrics." Knowing nothing about music, he would cram his scenario with action and never give the poor composer any scope for the expression of his art.

To the modern composer a good libretto is a necessity. True, many fine operas have been written to very bad libretti, but set arias and concerted pieces were the

making of old fashioned opera. A modern composer could not work in that way. Even if he desired to use all the old conventional forms of opera (and, aesthetically, he could justify his desire) he must have a dramatic form which will enable him to use his orchestra as a chorus commenting on the dramatic action. The set aria, threaded on a rough string of recitation or even spoken dialogue, is no longer tolerable. No doubt the only perfect librettist is either the composer himself or a poet who has practical knowledge of music and a clear idea of its possibilities. Failing that, and few composers have Wagner's instinctive and trained knowledge of the stage, it should not be impossible for the musician to work in harmony with the poet, who must first of all recognize that as music is to be the main medium of expression literary fancy cannot indulge in extended flights. In the ordinary libretto there is an amiable contest between the poet and the musician. The poet elaborates a scene with literary fancy and the composer has to struggle with it as best he may. The libretto of 'The Two Sisters,' recently produced at Cambridge, is an instance of that. The librettist gave herself a free hand without any grasp of the needs of drama, and she employed an archaic jargon which, when it managed to get itself heard, had no meaning at all, or else sounded merely ridiculous. She indulged in expletives such as "What!" which cannot be sung at all. A much simpler style of verse is required for an opera libretto. Its rhythm must be strong, varied and suited to the emotion of the scene. The actual shape of the verse does not matter. Indeed, simple rhythmic prose of the type of the Old Testament is easier to set to music than a lyric which has the specific shape of verse, and that is true even of songs. As most modern composers are educated men I cannot understand why they do not write their own libretti with the help, perhaps, of someone skilled in stage craft. The "book" might not have any special literary value divorced from the music, but, provided the composer had dramatic imagination, it would give him what is wanted. Moreover, he would be able to alter his libretto as occasion demanded and would therefore not be fettered and bound by verse that gives him no opportunity for expansion.

Apart altogether from the actual writing of an opera libretto our composers should free themselves from the supernatural. Wagner set the fashion in this. Since his day our composers have worshipped the "myth" as the only suitable subject for opera. That has given us the turgid 'Dylan' and 'Children of Don' of Mr. Josef Holbrooke and Mr. "Ellis." As a matter of fact, myth is quite unsuitable to the stage. Wagner's genius as composer was inspired by it and made us, to some extent, overlook the ridiculousness of mythical personages on the stage. In witnessing 'The Ring' we are compelled to shut down a very natural criticism of his gods and goddesses. The music lifts us above the realism of their presentation, always a ridiculous realism, and makes us view them merely as symbols of the dramatist's ideas. But this divided consciousness of the dramatic idea and the manner in which the unavoidable limitations of the stage present it mars an appreciation of a work of art. We are really only interested in Siegfried when he is a superhuman being. In 'Tristan,' in which the "magic" is negligible, and in 'Die Meistersinger,' where there is no magic at all, Wagner was the greater dramatist. In 'Lohengrin' and 'Tannhäuser,' it may be noted, Wagner's early grasp of the stage made him adopt a useful compromise. He kept his magic in a separate compartment, and wrote dramas in which the characters may be taken quite easily for human beings. Speaking trees and birds, and symbolical wild-fowl of sorts are never impressive on the stage, nor are druidical personages in clean white linen. If we are to have a British opera we must get away from the hocus-pocus of legendary lore which has had such a fatal fascination for the few native composers who have written opera. Even Shakespeare's great genius could not make 'The Tempest' or 'A Midsummer Night's Dream' effective as stage plays. There is a big choice

of genuine British subjects in the old dramatists. Even when their plays were founded on Italian tales or classic legends they remained British to the core. Why should not our composers struggle out of the fog of myth and emerge into the bracing and clear air of human drama? If they had the courage to appear less profound no doubt they would not long have the right to complain of being neglected.

Verse

SECOND SEEING

IF He be truly Christ
The Sacrificed,

Then I am deaf and blind as they
Who hung Him up between
The two thieves mean,
In Calvary upon a moaning day.

If I not recognize
Within His eyes

The slow bloodfall down pools of pain,
Nor on contracted brows
The thorns that house
Their swords about the anguish of His brain.

If I do not perceive
His mother grieve

Below the rood where He hangs crossed,
Nor hear the sea and wind
Cry, "Thou hast sinned!"

Then woe is me that I am doubly lost.

This is not He alone
Whom I have known,

This is all Christs since Time began.
The blood of all the dead
His veins have shed,

For He is God and Ghost and Everyman.

Louis GOLDING

NATURE AND COUNTRY LIFE

By A WOODMAN

These sketches, which will appear serially in the SATURDAY REVIEW, are the work of a farm and forest labourer whose opportunities for gaining knowledge since he left school at the age of eight have been limited to the world of fields and woods. From his own rough notes and with the aid of his wife, who, fortunately, is an excellent penwoman, the fair copy was made by him in his scanty leisure; and with the exception of the very slightest editorial touches from the friend to whom he first showed them they remain as he wrote them.

II. BY THE SIDE OF THE RIVER AVON

THE river Avon has perhaps been more immortalized in popular poetry than any other river in these isles. All my early life was spent in close vicinity to it; and the beauties of Nature that are to be seen in those lovely stretches of the river are too deeply engraved on my memory for time to efface. There you can wander for hours amid such richness of vegetation that you might imagine yourself in the Tropics. It is an aspect of peculiar beauty and fertility perhaps seldom, if ever, to be met with elsewhere.

On the banks, and even on the water, flowers of many varied hues bloom to perfection. The tall brown feathery bloom of the reed nods beside the brown reedmace, and is shaken by every breeze that makes a ripple on the surface of the river. The yellow iris towers above the white and golden water-lilies, whose leaves, touching each other, make a hiding-place for many a fish. The rich purple flowering willow, or rose bay, mixes with the exquisite blue forget-me-not; and the odour of brookmint fills the air. Along the banks are silvery willows which cast their shadows on the stream; and opening their small yellow blooms in early Spring, nourish various insect tribes, when scarce another flower offers them food.

Beautiful as they are in that early time, there is a period when they are more so, and that is when the bloom has ripened and the soft downy clusters are floating far and wide on the gentle breezes.

It is pleasant to wander here at early morn, or when the twilight shadows are spreading over the landscape, and listen to the music of the water as it winds among the reeds and sedges, and seems to be Nature's appointed accompaniment to the singing of the birds.

The familiar dark blue form of the swallow skims so near to you that you can hear the snap of his beak as he catches a fly; and over the water the sand-martin flies among the gnats. The sunshine glitters on the stream, and every dewdrop sparkles like a diamond. There seems a sacred silence on the surrounding country broken only by the music of Nature, which is never silent. This is the haunt of many creatures of the wild; and here may be heard at practically any hour in the season of the year he is resident with us the song of the sedge-warbler, even when the moon and stars are shining. You may perhaps catch a glimpse of this annual visitor as he sits for a moment on the hawthorn bush covered with pink and white blossoms; but he is more often heard than seen, as the sedges and flowering rushes—his favourite haunts—keep him out of sight. This bird visits our isles in April, and will remain even until October; he is, with his companion the reed-warbler, the earliest migratory songster of the riverside.

Very beautiful is the nest of the reed-warbler, which is composed of long grasses wound round three or four reeds which act as a support, and is lined with the soft down of the willow and wool. If you look at the flood mark on that old beech tree at the bend of the river you will see the nest is placed at such a height in the reeds as to be in perfect safety. Many times when a boy I swam out to the reeds to see their nests, but I could never be tempted to take one; and even if I had, it would have been necessary to cut the reeds, so firmly is it bound to them.

On the top of one of the pollard willows that grow on the bank, under a bower of brambles and mountain ash—undoubtedly carried there and dropped by some bird—a wild duck makes its nest.

In a hole in the bank a kingfisher has for a number of years had its nest, despite the fact that I once removed the turf to look at it, but before replacing it I put some strips of board across so that it was in no way disturbed.

You can see and hear the snipe drumming to his mate as she sits on her nest; and if we walk here in Winter, his "scape, scape, skeep" will be heard as we startle him from the little ditches that here and there intersect these broad meadowlands by the river side.

If you part the grasses on the bank, you will find a little run leading to the hole of the water-vole, and if you happen to alarm him, as he sits feeding, he drops with a loud plop into the water, which acts as a warning to other creatures of the riverside. The Otter, too, has his home here, but of him I must write some other time. At spots like these it is delightsome to feel alone with Nature, and, it may be, through Nature, with Nature's Designer.

Correspondence

A PARADISE OF SOCIALISM

(FROM A CORRESPONDENT)

Geneva, Feb. 20

TWENTY-FOUR hours ago the city of Geneva lay buried under a heavy fall of snow. At once a battalion of municipal workmen were despatched into the streets, and already, in all the principal thoroughfares, the snow stands neatly packed in rectangular masses. Soon the municipal carts will arrive and the snow will

be cast into the Rhone. In another twenty-four hours Geneva will be clean and dry again.

Think of London snowbound even to-day under a modern County Council. Perhaps the situation will be dealt with rapidly and effectively, though memories of London in such conditions of the weather do not provoke this expectation. It is anyhow certain that there would be no enthusiastic packing of the snow into rectangular patterns, no glad host of vehicles waiting for just this expected opportunity to bear it away, no impression that London had been waiting for just this emergency in order to deal with it proudly and contentedly. In London we reserve our enthusiasm and delight for more important and complicated activities. Switzerland, however, is the country where municipal socialism is practised with an ardour and a perfection which has never elsewhere been equalled. Switzerland is the Martha among nations, the perfect housewife who regulates her *ménage* down to the smallest detail and finds in her office a mild satisfaction which compensates her for the arduous and ambitions of her militant and restless neighbours. Those who have the curiosity to ascertain how far in practice the activities of the State can go in regulating the daily lives of its citizens, should study the laws passed by the Swiss Government during the war. If we remember rightly it was impossible under this legislation to peel a potato without transgression; almost certainly it was unlawful to throw away the peel; and we are convinced that, if anyone ventured to do so, the federal inspector of refuse was bound to discover and report the fact within twenty-four hours. It is long before a foreigner settling in Switzerland begins to comprehend the ramifications of these benevolent activities. You may go to bed owing your tailor two hundred francs. The next morning you find that it is the postman who expects to be paid, or that a bank, presumably at the instigation of your creditor, is lending you the money at six per cent, in order to enable you to meet the obligation.

It is curious that few of the eloquent and ingenious authors who have preached socialism to the English for the last fifty years seem to have studied it in its spiritual home. Here in Switzerland we live in a paradise of socialism. While Mr. Sidney Webb and Mr. Bernard Shaw have been preaching socialism, M. Gustave Ador and M. Giuseppe Motta have been practising it. People still go on wondering what a benevolent collectivism would do for a nation if it were prudently and sensibly tried. Here in Switzerland we know, to our cost, what it has actually achieved. If Mr. Bernard Shaw would abandon Adelphi Terrace in favour of the Quai du Mont Blanc, he would see more socialism in twelve months than he has preached for fifty years. At the end of the twelve months (if he had been able to stand twelve months of it) he would return to Adelphi Terrace and spend the rest of his days in broadcloth and recantation.

We stipulate for twelve months. Six months would be insufficient. The first six months has compensations and surprises to soothe and interest the intruder. For six months the stranger may observe with pleasure that the Swiss maid is as well dressed and as well mannered as the Swiss mistress. It takes him another six months to realize that this is but another way of saying that the Swiss mistress is only as well dressed and as well mannered as the Swiss maid. For six months the stranger is delighted to note that hardly anyone in Switzerland is badly educated. It takes him another six months to realize that hardly anyone is well educated. For six months the stranger remarks with admiration that almost everybody in Switzerland can speak three or four languages fluently. It takes him another six months to realize that hardly anyone in Switzerland can speak a single language with distinction. For six months the stranger is pleased to note that most of the people have contented and intelligent faces. It takes him another six months to realize that none of the faces is really animated or inspired.

In twelve months the stranger has realized that socialism, even when practised under the most favour-

able conditions, in a small country that never has to go to war or look beyond the sphere of municipal politics, implies the elimination from the lives of its practitioners of all that is distinguished or exceptional in character, intellect, art, literature, and manners—in everything, that is, which differentiates individuals who form a society from a society which forms the individual. This, of course, is bitterly denied by all theoretical socialists. Much has been written *a priori* of the compatibility of socialism with a rich and varied development of individual gifts. It has been argued that, far from suppressing individual distinction, socialism, by putting men on an equality, freeing them from material anxiety, and giving them all the same educational advantages, enables genius more often to become articulate and fruitful. The opponents of socialism have retorted, still *a priori*, that equal education for all implies a gradual discouragement of individuality among the educated; that socialism results in an intense pre-occupation with material things which gradually saps interest and enthusiasm for things of a less obviously profitable nature; that to make it easy for all to reach a certain level of achievement makes it easy for all to be contented to go no higher. Anything can be argued *a priori*. But here in Switzerland is a concrete case. Switzerland, owing to her position has been able to achieve most of the advantages of socialism on the material side, and in no country of the world could they have been achieved in an equal degree. The result may be studied on the spot.

It corroborates everything that intelligent individualists, who distrust the activities of the State, have written on the subject. Socialism, as practised in Switzerland, means that there is a more even level of comfort and education in the nation as a whole; but that, in order to secure it, the higher products of civilization are discouraged with a quiet, almost imperceptible, wholly unconscious pertinacity and ruthlessness, more effective than a dozen Holy Offices or a hundred Star Chambers. It means that obvious and easy things like cleaning the streets and delivering the letters are well done. It means that every Swiss child learns thoroughly and betimes to smatter in three or four literatures, to have a perfect knowledge of the crises of Swiss history (as when the Duke of Savoy in 1602 nearly captured Geneva and thirteen men were slain), and to know more about the Presidents of the Confederation than any Englishman will ever know about the Lord Mayors of London. It means that everywhere there are excellent schools where the trades and industries, the art and crafts, of the workshop and the home, are admirably taught. But it also means that the national heroes of Switzerland are, in effect, municipal councillors; that a person's character is determined by his certificates, and that little else remains to be determined in respect of him; that, if we except the fantastic carving of useful objects, there is no native art or any very deep or subtle appreciation of foreign achievements of the imagination; that not only the mentality of the people, but even their affections, senses and passions appear to have been reduced to a mild conformity with what is moderate, prudent and explicitly allowable.

In a word, the Swiss, under a highly socialized system of government, have decided that it is better to live by bread alone, even if this should mean dispensing with every word which proceedeth out of the mouth of God, than to risk a mismanagement of the bakery. The first result for the English intruder living among them is to soothe a mind agitated by too impulsive a grasp at the subtleties and intensities of contemporary thought. The second result is to provoke in the victim a violent but ineffectual struggle against mental and spiritual suffocation. Later still he finds himself speculating how long it will be before, like the lotus-eaters, he is content to lie upon the shores of this paradise, leaving all error and confusion and peril, the fever of aspiration and the fret of failure, to the immoderate, rash, headstrong and unaccountable English civilization into which he was born.

There, in brief, is your dilemma. Switzerland has shown that by concentrating on things which are of obvious and immediate utility and interest a nation may achieve happiness if it will be content with mediocrity. But do not imagine that such a nation can also have poets, statesmen, dramatists and painters, or any of the more supreme achievements in intellect, beauty or wit. These things emerge from a community in which the individual is left rather more to himself, where effort and initiative are more insistently demanded, where life is presented rather as a field for his adventure than as a park where all that is required of him is that he should keep off the grass.

Letters to the Editor

The Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW welcomes the free expression in these columns of genuine opinion on matters of public interest, although he disclaims responsibility alike for the opinions themselves and the manner of their expression. Letters which are of reasonable brevity and are signed with the writer's name are more likely to be published than long and anonymous communications.

URBANIZED ENGLAND

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Your admirable article on the Urbanization of England and the extinction of the rural capitalist, the squire, hits the nail on the head at every line. No other country faintly approaches ours in the overwhelming percentage of its people, gentle and simple, utterly ignorant of agriculture and completely absent-minded to all concerning it.

In the war the urban masses got frightened and grovelled to the farmer; he was a splendid fellow! When the scare was over, he again became a sort of grumbling fool who didn't know his own business. Worse still we have half-baked Labour orators, Radical scribblers and educated theorists who have never even touched the fringe of the most intricate and complicated business upon earth or had two-pennyworth of experience, lecturing those who have spent their lives in it in terms too childishly ingenuous to be worth powder and shot. The puerile shibboleth, that "ownership of his farm" is the hope and salvation of an enchain'd tenantry best illustrates the measure of this colossal urban ignorance. As your contributor shows, such a desire doesn't exist as a business proposition above the smaller grade of farmers who do their own work and have no pretension to clean or progressive farming in stock or tillage. I am old enough to have been at close quarters with farming in "the roaring 'seventies," before the great crash of the next decade, both in England and Scotland, and can recall as yesterday that dreadful slump, when the tillage counties of England practically collapsed, before cheap foreign grain, together with thousands of their tenantry and hundreds of their landlords. I know districts to-day that have never recovered from it. But I have never in my life met a tenant-farmer who, for business reasons, wished to own his own farm. Why should he? "The magic of ownership" as regards practical farming is a sentiment of purely urban origin—based on ignorance and misconception.

Looking back, however, one cannot acquit the agricultural interest prior to the 'eighties of rather heartless indifference to the labourer. I can well remember the sort of idea prevalent, and I fear I automatically shared it, that so long as he had a bare living he had no concern with the profits and rents, which were then high. I can dimly recall even the Wiltshire wage of 8s., and as a young man in the 'seventies was present when the whole labouring staff on a big Berkshire farm struck just before harvest for an advance on 11s. This under the inspiration of Joseph Arch, a farm labourer, and a really unselfish agitator, with God knows sufficient justification for the stir he occasioned throughout England. A Lothian farm of six hundred acres, then inti-

mately known to me, paid a rent of £2,000 and made a profit of about the same. But the then best farm-hands in the world got, including allowances, about 14s., the amazonian and efficient women-workers 6s. Before the war equity seemed to have been achieved, now the other extreme rules. The labourer and even raw lads are paid at artificially fixed wages, regardless of economic conditions, which may go hang! It seems fairly obvious, however, that the labourer must take precedence in the debacle, and in some parts is already doing so.

Yours etc.,
"MOONRAKER"

THE REVIVAL OF THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY *To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW*

SIR,—I thank Mr. James for his admission that constitutionalism is the essence of Conservatism. "Constitutional," then, is in itself an apt title for the party.

In defiance of his *ipse dixit* that the party has flourished upon its name, others dare to hold that it has flourished on its principles in spite of its name; which to my certain knowledge has often been misinterpreted by country electors, who are not always highly educated in the complexities of politics. Why misapply such epithets as "gross ingratitude" and "despicable" to a purely tactical suggestion? In capable hands a sledge-hammer may be an effective weapon against a mad bull, but is grotesque in an argument with a political colleague. Only a weaker antagonist can be browbeaten out of his convictions. A little clear thinking goes farther.

Party names have disappeared before without ingratiate or despicable conduct. Who dubs himself a "Whig" now? "Unionist" only lingers illogically. "Tory" is almost confined to the type, nearly yet evidently not quite extinct, which earned the nickname of the "Stupid Party." Mr. James should divert his heavy artillery to the Coalition Conservatives whom he justly censures. *Après moi le déluge* should be inscribed upon their banner. They have left an appalling mess which will be bigger still if they and the Diehards fight the next election under the same name. Thousands will be confused as to the kind of "Conservative" they are asked to support. And this is precisely the aim of some of our politicians.

Yours etc.,
"CONSTITUTIONAL"

'WHAT EVERY MAN WANTS TO KNOW'

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—I was much interested in the title of Mr. Austin Harrison's article which appeared in your issue of February 11, but I am much afraid that he did not satisfy many of your readers, and to a business man he appears to have been guilty of several mis-statements. He seems to have ignored the vital difference in the comparative positions of nations having internal debts only and those having also external debts. The depreciated currencies of the ex-allied countries will not assist them in the payment of their foreign debts. If, for example, French currency became so depreciated that devaluation was resorted to, would this put her into a good position in regard to payment of her dollar and sterling indebtedness? The position with regard to interest on such debts is similar and it is inaccurate to say that the interest increases as the gold parity on the dollar is approached—this would apply on internal loans only.

However, the burden of our debts is a serious one, without question, and I am not suggesting otherwise; but it will be remembered how Germany practically maintained her fighting forces from within and so avoided large foreign debts. The advantage of this would have been even more apparent had the question of reparations not arisen and we should then have seen

less depreciation in the mark than in the currencies of the ex-allies.

The mortgage scheme put forward as the solution of the world's difficulties is not explained in much detail by Mr. Harrison, but at first sight it would appear to be a distasteful one to the peoples of the debtor nations, and the broker nominated—America—has made it very clear on several occasions that she does not wish to dabble in the internal affairs of European countries.

Referring to figures used in the article, we are told Germany has a mark issue of 300 thousand millions, but on referring to your FINANCIAL SUPPLEMENT of the same date, the issue is given as 115 thousand millions and is, I believe, the accurate one. If the former figure were divided (for devaluation purposes) by 500 this would not leave Germany with a debt of £600,000,000 mentioned by your contributor, but 600,000,000 marks—a very different thing.

Yours etc.,
CHARLES F. FRANK

London, E.C.

LONDON ARCHITECTURE

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—I enjoyed Mr. MacColl's castigation of a few of our architects in the SATURDAY REVIEW a few weeks ago. I felt it was just; and for this reason: often when I see a new building rising in our City, I have to deplore with sorrow the opportunities missed by architects of beautifying London. Take, for example, the new offices of Lloyds Bank nearing completion, situated by the William IV statue and facing London Bridge. What an opportunity missed! It looms before the eye in the whole journey over the bridge. There might have been a grand impressive building to stir with admiration the thousands of business people journeying towards it every morning.

The building erected has some insignificant five-eighths diameter columns reaching to the second floor and the rest is a mass of rectangles. The columns do not harmonize with the rectangles and the whole face has the unprepossessing appearance of being flattened out to obtain as much space as possible. An excuse will be—that comment of the inscrutable client—space is valuable. It excuses but a small part of the present design, and three feet off the lower front could very well be sacrificed. Even the most elementary suggestions can point to vast improvements. Enlarge the columns so that they reach to the third floor, set the three floors back from the columns so as to allow a deeper and more impressive shadow and mass the windows synthetically. But "'tis done" and what matters the exhilaration felt by added grandeur to the magnificence of a great city?

Yours etc.,
ARNOLD WHITTICK
Princess Road, South Norwood

WAR MEMORIALS

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—Faults on a Memorial are generally the result of decisions being left to a small minority without reference to those who have legitimate concern in the matter. There is in our Parish Church of Wembley an instance of this kind, where, on a Memorial to those who died in the war, a small committee of four, without reference either to Vicar, churchwardens or relatives, arbitrarily adopted an order that was neither alphabetical nor chronological, the result being the placement of over 130 names in a confused jumble.

Dissatisfaction is the inevitable consequence, and now that another defect on this Memorial—that of omissions—is about to be remedied by the addition of some 40 names, the question arises in the minds of

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the relatives as to the order in which these names will appear. Will they this time be placed alphabetically, as is the general and common-sense wish, or will they be set up in a deliberate confusion to assort with those already on the Memorial?

On questions of this kind it is the will of the majority that should prevail, and it is only by a free exchange of ideas that this can be ascertained. For this reason I welcome the discussion that has been opened in your columns and trust it may lead to a satisfactory amendment of the epitaph on the Grave of the Unknown.

Yours etc.,
(MRS.) L. GREEN

Kingsleigh, Wembley

'SHIGIONOTH'

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—I was much interested in Mr. MacColl's article 'Shigionoth,' in your issue of February 18, where he remarks that "the shutting away, the part seclusion of working for a few patrons, not for the scrimmage of exhibition, is a wholesomer condition for the production of what will last." It has always seemed to me, a mere onlooker, that there is so much imitation, so little originality, such an inordinate amount of mutual admiration, in the artistic Group Systems that personality and individuality are too frequently lost. The somewhat isolated worker, free as he is from excessive group influence, is by no means to be pitied. His work often gains in distinction.

To me it would be poor praise to hear what I overheard at a private view of the London Group—"What a beautiful Vanessa Bell, why it might be a Duncan Grant!"

Yours etc.,
HILDA THORNTON

Painswick

LUNACY LAW REFORM

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—It is to be hoped that those about to investigate the administration of the lunacy laws in this country may see the urgency for instituting mental hospitals where patients suffering from incipient insanity or recurrent nervous disorders may receive, without being financially crippled, timely treatment and control, unhampered by the conditions attendant upon certification. Also, despite dictionary definitions, that it is not justifiable to detain asylum patients during lucid intervals of appreciable duration. There is no doubt that the lower classes are better catered for in this respect than their social superiors, to whom nursing homes close their doors in mental illness.

Yours etc.,
T. F. BISHOP

Hillcote, Newcastle-under-Lyme

WOMEN AND THE FRENCH ACADEMY

To the Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW

SIR,—The ambition of the Comtesse de Noailles to become a member of the French Academy is by no means a novelty, as your French Correspondent evidently believes. Madame George Sand and the Comtesse d'Agoult (known in literature as "Daniel Stern") both made efforts nearly seventy years ago, and many epigrams on the subject appeared in Parisian periodical publications. The French literary women, however, cannot complain of want of patronage and encouragement by members of the French Academy, as many of the annual foundation prizes for works of historical and literary merit have been awarded to women during the last half-century.

Yours etc.,
ANDREW DE TERNANT

Somerleyton Road, Brixton, S.W.

Reviews

DIRTY WORK

I Have Only Myself to Blame. By Princess Bibesco. Heinemann. 7s. 6d. net.

IN the ordinary way we should dismiss this collection of loosely-strung sketches or scenes with a few lines expressive of surprise that anyone should think it worth while to write so indifferently about sensualized types when there is a boundless range of choice. There is little literary or artistic quality in these stories, exclusively concerned with the stale reiteration of passion and we are unable to discover the "wit" and "brilliance" that might be some compensation for the gross lack of taste that is conspicuous throughout the book. Nor can Princess Bibesco lay claim to "unconventionalism," for the kind of talk in which the various lovers indulge, that at no very remote period of our history would have been repudiated by self-respecting chorus girls, is now considered *comme il faut* in high-class feminine circles and clubs.

The book has, however, a significance of the most serious importance, and it is from this point of view that we propose briefly considering it. It is a sound general rule not to take into account the personality of the writer when estimating his writings. But in this particular instance the personality of Princess Bibesco is inseparable from the *raison d'être* and popularity of the book. With every advantage that an exalted social position can give, with traditions and surroundings of refinement and culture, the daughter of a man who has filled the highest functions of the State, and of a mother who has shown many of the qualities of the successful woman of the world, with all the advantages conferred by travel, education and accomplishments, surely we had a right to assume that the stories by Princess Bibesco would be the very last in the world where we should find a lack of reserve, a mode of handling things usually considered intimate that must disgust the least fastidious, a nastiness of which well-conducted errand boys would be ashamed; an attitude of mind in short that it is extremely difficult to characterize. Here is a sample of what we mean.

One of these studies in the Cult of the Erotic introduces us to Catherine, a young woman recently married, her husband (whom we are bound to say, like all the men in this type of fiction, with his lack of dignity and manliness, is fitly mated), and two friends who are spending the evening at their house. Both sets of husbands and wives are intended to be persons of social standing. Unfortunately we cannot quote the earlier part of the conversation which is simply dragged in so that Catherine the wife can give the usual sexual information about her Uncle George. But as it cannot all be kept in this delightful strain, she is much "bored," and we are told the silence was broken first by Horace offering his guest a cigar and then by Catherine asking the simple question of whether the telephone rates were really to be raised.

I know I shall start talking about venereal diseases if this atmosphere lasts much longer, she said to herself.

Whether this is wit or merely brilliant we do not know. Let us continue to explore the depths of vulgarity exhibited.

Here is a specimen of the type of joke greatly in favour with this school of fiction to-day. The woman, who is married, goes to see her lover.

Dinner is announced—Jameson is abandoned.

She wants this meal to be a Holy Communion between them. This mixture of piety and sensualism is somewhat disconcerting at first, but after a course of this fiction one comes to perceive it is considered wit of a very high order. In another of these chapters Helena drives to a Westminster flat, where her lover lives, and offers herself to him, having, we are told, "keyed" herself up. She talks in this strain:

You who think passion is bad taste because you are not tempted, you to whom the physical side is a degrading extra.

Equally choice is the lover in *his* style—the literary flavour will be noticed. By this time he has gripped her two arms. Notwithstanding, in a "voice like ice," he says: "I don't accept a debased currency."

It may interest those studying the Woman's Movement to know that the men in this school of realism offer the women inconceivable insults which they rather like than otherwise. In another book of the same kind, an artist of a degraded type, after knowing a girl a few days—she is painted as a highly modern product and is in addition the daughter of a minister—says that he would "like to see her walking naked in the dusk," a remark received with gratitude that starts the liaison she has with him for ten years in secret.

We have shown sufficiently the material and treatment favoured by Princess Bibesco, and if the book were an isolated one, if any signs of disapproval had been forthcoming from women themselves, the issues involved would be individual and of no importance. But not only is the book not an isolated instance, but it accurately reproduces the tone and style and point of view of the flood of novels *from the hands of women*, that have been poured forth ceaselessly during the last six years, without we believe a single protest, encouraged by the two or three women critics who came into notoriety during the war, and exhibit a virgin ignorance alike of scholarship and manners: and, more disquieting, are to be found on the shelves of the local circulating libraries for every boy and girl to read. Examine these pages. Not from the standpoint of morality, which would lead us into deeper enquiries than can be handled here, but from that of ordinary taste, decorum, respect and observance of those restraints which civilization imposes if we are not to return into anarchy. Marriage sensualized and vulgarized is painted in its most sordid details: gynaecological details are given suitable alone for a midwifery text book ('Their Hearts'): the ties between mother and child are treated from muddled notions of Freud's theories of sex, and the most sacred of relations defiled: even the children are not respected; the child Joanna (in 'The Open Door') at nine years old sees a man's "hairy" ankles and has "guilty thoughts"; and there is a passage in 'A Marrying Man,' in which a boy of seventeen states his view of the relations of his "fair mother" to a man with a black colouring, after being asked by the degenerate heroine, a woman of forty-five, whether his interest in women is "pathological" or "something else," which we believe to be without parallel. All the women intellectuals smoke, drink and say "damn" on the least excuse. In 'Martha and Mary,' which the publisher, if he has any conscience, will burn, one of the heroines says to her lover, "Owen, for goodness sake stop making that bloody row." Chastity in this dreary, dull, sordid atmosphere, is either tacitly or by actual expression, regarded as an "exploded theory." In a book without style or coherence and highly praised by a leading weekly for its "wit and beauty," the following words occur. It is to be found at all the libraries. A number of young girls, college-trained and otherwise, are assembled. They talk, and if their talk really represents them, which we decline to believe, the sooner women's colleges close their doors the better. We cannot quote the whole infamous passage. Here are the concluding words. Judith said:

I am longing to explain my measures for dispensing with prostitutes and fertilizing virgins by Act of Parliament. She went on to tell us of an invention of hers to be erected at the tube stations and other public resorts, which upon payment of a small fee would safeguard the nation's health, accommodate its sons and relieve its daughters.

While we must not be taken to say that no novels written by women are free from these deteriorating and destroying elements, we maintain that the above class of book is becoming ever more popular: and that if we do not stop its growth we shall be producing a race of men and women whose lives are being poisoned at the source. Never in any age or country so far as we know has there been this situation of numberless dirty

books written by women; never so rapid and intense a declension from so high an ideal. We believe the "Emancipation" Movement of Women to be largely responsible. Its exaggerated individualism is opposed to the great unifying principles of the finest civilizations and is one-sided and de-humanizing. Outward interests and distractions and showy spectacular activities, involving no service of the soul, no spiritual and moral development; the reliance on movements, masses and committees; the throwing-off of all restraint and standards; the license to "do what one likes," lead not to freedom but to anarchy: its growth is seen in the modern novels by women.

POLITICAL ESSAYS

Unpopular Opinions. By Harold Owen. Erskine Macdonald. 6s. net.

IT might have been expected that these articles, which were written by Mr. Harold Owen as running commentaries on political events, would suffer from their presentation in book form. Nothing of the kind. The author is not a mere chronicler of events, though he makes a liberal use of events as illustrations of a well-considered and profoundly-reasoned political philosophy. He surveys the political landscape with the artist's eye. He sees it in perspective—every detail and feature of it. Thus the book, although thrown together as it were, has an essential unity. Those who have lost their political bearings—and they are many—will be helped by the wayside; those—and they are by no means few—who have ceased to own allegiance to any political denomination will find in Mr. Harold Owen a well-equipped and doughty brother-in-arms. Like many thoughtful persons Mr. Owen was once a Liberal. If he has not ceased to believe in Liberalism, he has acquired a healthy contempt for Liberals. He denounces in no unmeasured terms their love of every country, provided it be not England. He exposes their "surface" sentimentalities and their "copybook" minds. He derides their shoddy and meretricious catchwords, their hollow generalities and their venerable platitudes. As regards the accepted leaders of Liberalism, he is particularly effective in laying bare the flimsy mental coverings of Sir Donald MacLean's mind. Sir Donald, perhaps, more than any other prominent member of the party, shows a greater disposition to clothe his mental nakedness with "verbal ready-mades and reach-me-downs." But for real penetrating insight into the unstable affections of the democracy, the passage in which the author speculates upon the thoughts which may have agitated Mr. Asquith's mind as he passed in his "triumphal march" through the crowded and cheering streets on his return to Parliament, after two years' absence, is particularly commendable. It will be remembered that Mr. Asquith was universally held out at this time as the "Saviour of England." His return to Parliament was to inject into that decaying and unhealthy body the blood of a new life and the energy of a new vigour. The wild demonstrations of affectionate enthusiasm which spontaneously surged from the vast crowds as Mr. Asquith made his way through them *en route* for Westminster, confirmed the popular belief that the veteran statesman reappeared as a political Messiah. Writing before the acclamations of the multitude had died down and in such a scene as this, Mr. Owen asks whether a doubt ever stole into the hero's mind as to whether "the erratic influences that had dethroned him yesterday and were trying to re-enthroned him to-day, would cast him down again to-morrow, all with the same shameless clamour, if he no longer served their turn." Having posed this question the writer answers it like a true philosopher. He concludes, with happy irony, that Mr. Asquith would probably feel secure in the thought that "the great heart of the people was sound, after all."

With equal disdain are the leaders of Unionism, and particularly the Lord Chancellor, treated, although here, as elsewhere, the writer is satisfied with an exposure of their mental dishonesties and their opportunist inconsistencies rather than with an analysis of individual character. But it is when dealing with Labour that he is most happy. Here it is that he speaks of the vices of social reform and proclaims that it would be better in every way that Labour should attain the status of full economic justice by its own exertions than that it should continue a helot class to which the social conscience gave the compensation of political charity as a set-off against economic injustice.

What, then, is the conclusion? In these days when a man who criticizes means is assumed by his adversaries to be opposing ends, it requires to be stated with some emphasis that he may believe in freedom who loathes bureaucratic government; that he may be a genuine enthusiast for human happiness who is convinced that vast schemes of reconstruction, dependent as they are on vast schemes of taxation, are directly conducive to human misery; that he may be a democrat who holds that the State should limit its activities to the essential services of government and that Democracy must accept the restraints of the Constitution if it wishes to preserve its liberties. These are views with which readers of the SATURDAY REVIEW are familiar, and they will find a happy confirmation of them in the book which Mr. Harold Owen has chosen to call 'Unpopular Opinions.' They will, it is to be hoped, find no difficulty in agreeing that a genuine reaction from the present theories and tendencies of government, a return to Constitutional methods and a recontraction of the State within natural political contours, are the most hopeful remedies for our political corruptions, if they be not the solution of democratic government itself.

A NEW PHILOSOPHY OF EVOLUTION

The Evolution of Consciousness. By A. Wyatt Tilby. Fisher Unwin. 15s. net.

THIS book should have many readers from among those who have been attracted to the study of the history of this planet as told in the popular and fascinating manner of Mr. Wells's 'Outline of History' and Prof. J. A. Thomson's new 'Outline of Science.' Mr. Tilby has undertaken the study of the evolution of consciousness, of the development of mental processes, and of the formation of instinct with its stereotyped modes of action and of intellect with its abstract ideas and moral ideals. The work is not original in the sense that the scientific and philosophical generalizations are the result of the author's own researches, but it is fresh and vigorous. Mr. Tilby draws, and draws freely, from the great storehouse of scientific knowledge, but he writes with a freedom of expression, a command of fact, and a genial humour, which make his conclusions striking even when they are not new.

The purpose is to present a philosophy of the organism, and the leading idea is clearly suggested by Bergson's 'Creative Evolution.' It is that consciousness and all the higher processes of the mind are a product of organic evolution, and that their existence and the form of their activity are determined rigorously by their utility. But while Bergson is wholly concerned to discover the philosophical principle which will satisfactorily interpret this evolution, to find a concept which will embrace the *vis a tergo* or impelling force, the *elan vital*, together with the end or purpose for which that force is seeking free outlet, Mr. Tilby seems content to reconstruct the stages of the evolutionary process itself, and is satisfied that in so doing he is writing philosophy. Even this is not original. It recalls exactly the principle of Herbert Spencer's philosophy of evolution. Spencer thought he had only to show the simpler conditions out of which the more complex had proceeded and that the interpretation of the

process would be manifest. There is a good deal of present-day theory which proclaims itself to be philosophy and is no profounder. The feeling of an absence, of a want of principle, or rather the kind of tacit assumption that the absence of an interpretative principle is itself a philosophy, is positively oppressive in reading this book, notwithstanding its exuberant wealth of biological and psychological material. Take the opening chapter on the development of the senses, for example. It is exceedingly good stuff, illustrated by a comparison with the quaint medieval mystery play, 'Everyman.' But the comparison which will occur to everyone who knows it is with the eighteenth-century philosopher Condillac's 'Treatise.'

Mr. Tilby's science is of course modern and far in advance of the older philosopher's, but how far behind in philosophical suggestiveness! Mr. Tilby is content to date the order of emergence of the special senses, Condillac will show in what way each as it emerges enriches the mind. A consciousness, he reasons, were it restricted to one sense, such as smell, would have all that is essential to characterize mind, and yet would be unaware of an external world. For this awareness touch is essential.

More marked, however, is the bareness of the philosophy when we come to what is the central argument of the book. "Consciousness," we are told, "may be regarded as an exquisitely sensitized chemical combination." To rationalize this doctrine we have a long exposition of memory. Memory is shown to account for instinct on the one hand and intellect on the other, but it is itself fundamentally and essentially a physical fact. An illustration of physical memory is the track left on the mind of a primeval shore preserved through geological ages as an impression in the rock. There may be no objection to describing such a fact as physical memory, but before we can take it seriously as a basis for a theory of the evolution of instinct and intelligence, two questions in regard to it must be answered, clearly and without ambiguity—Whose memory? And, memory of what? There is no hint of a reply by Mr. Tilby to either question.

A JEREMIAD

Facing Reality. By Esmé Wingfield-Stratford. Hutchinson. 10s. 6d. net.

DR. WINGFIELD-STRATFORD is very worried about Humanity. He looks round him and sees on all sides selfishness, ignorance, wilful stupidity, and it disturbs and even irritates him. Conditions, he says, have changed, but we have not adapted our mode of life to the change, and civilization is therefore heedlessly "shooting Niagara." But that is not all. We steadfastly refuse to face facts. We are too flippant by half. We pay too much attention to cricket and bridge, and we don't talk politics at tennis parties. In a preface the author pleads for tolerance in the reader, and we have accordingly worn a smile throughout the perusal of his book, though he divulges some shocking facts. He exposes the stupidity of the masses who are satisfied with lurid melodrama at the theatre, and the wickedness of those who supply the demand for it; he tirades against the prostitution of the Press; he has discovered the hideousness of advertisement hoardings, and the knavery of the purveyors of patent medicines; he explains that the Great War was foolish and wicked and wanton. All these faults are no doubt very reprehensible, and it might be very edifying to be told of them for the first time. But they are faults of which most of us have long been conscious, so that instead of startling us with his catalogue of seventy and seven deadly sins, the author merely astonishes us at the weakness of his case. If this is the worst that can be said, we feel, things are not so bad after all. And we thereupon turn our back on Reality and proceed to our normal pursuits, wilfully and woefully blind to obvious portents.

Dr. Wingfield-Stratford in exposing the blunders and prejudices of the day exposes also his own blunders and prejudices. If he is a realist he is a sentimental realist, and he falls into the usual error of reformers, being enchanted by distance and conceiving the past to be ideal. So he sighs again for the good old days of "roast beef and plum-pudding," and seems to imagine that life in those days was all roast beef and pudding and that there was then no poverty, no drudgery, no pain. Elsewhere he denounces snobbishness, but he has himself a good deal to say in a superior tone about suburban villas and so on: "The imaginary beau ideals were of course assumed to be aristocrats of the bluest blood, but their place of birth was nearer to Ealing than to Portman Square and they had most honour in their own native Suburbia." But though he admits class distinctions between Englishmen and Englishmen, he strangely allows none between Englishmen and coloured peoples, and alludes bitterly to our government of "races supposed to be inferior."

Altogether, we are a bad lot and things are in a deplorable condition. And Dr. Wingfield-Stratford, who reveals our failings, has, of course, a remedy. What is it? Simply this. We must "regain our singleness of vision." We need a "change of spirit." We must be "born again," and live up to the principle: "love thy neighbour as thyself." "The disease and the remedy are within ourselves." Reality, he explains, is another word for religion in its broadest sense, and to say that we must "get right with reality" is another way of saying we must "get right with God." Once more we are treated to commonplace. By platitudes he has knocked us down and by platitudes he would set us up again. All we need is "a change of spirit"—just as one might be ordered by the doctor to have a change of air.

And then, just at the end, the author goes and spoils it all. "To increase in wisdom and in goodness," he writes, "ought to be as natural as it is to increase in stature." Yet what man by taking thought can add one cubit to his stature? The author himself illustrates that impossibility by the story of the maidens who leap in the magic circle crying "Flax grow! Flax grow!" and it grows not. This is the key to the situation. Man cannot increase in goodness and wisdom as fast as he would like. He has made the machine and the machine has got the better of him; it is travelling faster than he is; matter is racing ahead of mind. If events move very swiftly man cannot as swiftly adapt himself; he sails along, as it were, a tack behind. Everybody is ready to admit the high seriousness of the situation, and almost everybody has his own patent scheme for remedying it. But it cannot, we think, be done by talking politics at tennis parties. And how, precisely, does one set about being born again?

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION

Recollections of the Revolution and the Empire: from the French of the 'Journal d'une femme de cinquante ans.' By la Marquise de La Tour du Pin. Edited and translated by Walter Geer. Cape. 30s. net.

THE period covered by these memoirs is certainly one of the most interesting in history. Great men, great events, great ideas crowd the stage. But the birth of a new world is not a comfortable thing at which to assist, and Mme. de La Tour had her full share of anxieties, dangers and adventure. Daughter of a Lady of Honour to Marie Antoinette, related to some of the noblest families in England and France, married to the son of the Minister of War to Louis XVI, she was brought as a child into the centre of affairs and, though no one knew it at the time, of danger. A woman of courage and sensibility, of good sense and sound judgment, the stupendous events which she witnessed and in which she took part, have informed her writing with

a literary value of which she was apparently unconscious. Her style is simple and direct, her observations shrewd and just, her story fascinating, thrilling, breathless like a novel by Dumas or Stevenson. Incidentally Mme. de La Tour gives us from personal observation a brilliant series of portraits of many of the principal characters of the period—beginning with Louis XVI, who "was so shortsighted that he could not recognize anyone at three paces. He was a fat man of medium height, with high shoulders and the worst form that you could imagine. He had the air of a peasant and there was nothing lofty or royal in his mien. He was always embarrassed by his sword and did not know what to do with his hat"; and ending with Louis XVIII, on his return from exile, in a carriage drawn to the cathedral at Amiens by fifty or sixty millers of the town, according to their ancient privilege, "all attired at their own expense in new costumes of grey-white cloth, with large hats of white felt."

We cannot however, as we should like, follow Mme. de La Tour and her husband through all their adventures—in Holland as French Minister in 1790; at Bordeaux in 1793 under the atrocious reign of Tallien and Thérésia Cabarrus; in exile in the United States and in England; in their wonderful journey in Spain; in their triumphs at the Prefecture in Brussels under Napoleon; in their sudden dismissal and the post-haste journey of the intrepid and tireless Mme. de La Tour from Brussels to the Trianon and in her remarkable interview there with the Emperor, who confessed "perhaps the only time in his life," as she says, "'I have made a mistake.'" We feel however that we should mention the charming picture of Mme. de La Tour's life in the United States as a dairy-woman and farmer's wife, which she always looked upon as her happiest years, and the pity and terror of the period of her stay at Bordeaux, and the horror inspired by the presence of Tallien, whose carriage "was the only one which rolled in the streets of this large city." Mme. de La Tour was not singular in this feeling, and her description of Tallien and Mme. de Fontenay paying a friendly visit, for a game of billiards, to the Swedish Consul is delicious. Everyone was too frightened to make a stroke and "the poor Swedish Consul and his charming daughter were more dead than alive at receiving this amiable visit from the representative of the people."

But this is a book that should be read, and Mr. Geer's translation has brought these wonderful recollections, in an admirable form, within the reach of English readers.

A PILOT-CUTTER IN THE PACIFIC

The Cruise of the Dream Ship. By Ralph Stock. Heinemann. 15s. net.

"WE all have our dreams." So Mr. Stock, somewhat tritely, in his opening sentence. His dream was to cruise through the South Sea Islands in his own ship, and this book tells us how delightfully it all came true. We also, who write this review, have had, still have, our dream. It is a dream much more modest than Mr. Stock's; but, alas! it has never come true yet. It seemed to be trembling on the verge of realization during the first two or three chapters of this narrative, only to recede into the limbo of things hoped for but not seen. We have had many of these disappointments before, the last and most severe being Jack London's 'Voyage of the Snark'—most severe because in two chapters on 'The Monstrous and Increditable' and 'The Amateur Navigator' Jack London showed how easily and how satisfactorily he could have made our dream a reality.

What is this dream of ours? It is simply that some day a man who has sailed his own dreamship to the world's end, as Jack London and Mr. Stocks did, shall sit down and from diaries and logs and memories write a proper account of it, telling us all the things that we really want to know about such adventurous

voyage how furnished And about Snark them. these mend old p and s three crawl London prope descri factor Holy descri how painted trous the e to his he ex Dane at night illustre scene. T and passa the Palm and real ever known that own book He i "tec very the n the H has they read the pilot reali How I do Brit bree the sele justi capri the the first evid The beau with than the clun

voyages, in the same way that Defoe told us exactly how Robinson Crusoe set up house on his island and furnished himself with stores from the wrecked ship. And what are the things that we really want to hear about such voyages as the *Dream Ship's* or the *Snark's*? Surely those things which are peculiar to them. Not descriptions of the places visited, when these are easily accessible by other means, but rather the most minute and particular accounts of the tremendously fascinating business of getting there in an old pilot-cutter, bought and fitted out at Brixham, and sailed by a queerly assorted amateur crew of three—brother, sister, and friend. If a man should crawl on his hands and knees from Manchester to London and afterwards write a book about it, the proper interest (if any) of that book would not lie in descriptions of Lichfield Cathedral, the motor-car factories of Coventry or the coaching inns on the Holyhead road, although they might be quite good descriptions. It would lie rather in information as to how the traveller fared on that mile of newly tar-painted road near Wilmslow, how many pairs of trousers he wore out in the first fifty miles, whether the expedient of transferring his boots from his feet to his hands was on the whole a gain in comfort, how he extricated himself from the trouble with the Great Dane at Rugby, and whether he found it safe to travel at night without a rear light; and there might be as illustrations some worm's-eye views of Midland scenery.

'The Cruise of the Dream Ship' is a pretty book, and contains pleasant accounts and pictures of the passage of the Panama Canal, the Galapagos Islands, the Marquesas, the Paumotus, Papeete, Moorea, Palmerston and Savage Islands, the Friendly Islands and Thursday Island. There is just enough of the real stuff in it to make us wish that there had been ever so much more. We suspect that Mr. Stock knows as well as we do what the real stuff is, and that he is a victim to the common delusion that his own love of it is something which people who buy books could not be expected to understand or share. He is probably afraid of inflicting what are called "technicalities" on the reader. It is, of course, a very profound mistake. "Technicalities" are amongst the most intensely interesting things in life, and in the hands of a man who can feel and write, and who has learned their meaning for himself experimentally, they have an irresistible fascination for far more readers than Mr. Stock has yet appealed to. When the *Dream Ship's* successor, a Bristol Channel pilot-cutter, puts to sea, we hope that it will be to realize not only his dreams, but ours.

DOGS

How to Choose a Dog. By F. T. Barton. Jarrold. 5s. net.

IN this useful little work its highly qualified author deals with every type of dog maintained in the British Islands. A page or two is devoted to each breed, with excellent photographic illustrations. From the St. Bernard to the Toy Pom, advice, given as to selection and purchase with the average current prices, justifies the title. But there is much more than this of interest to dog-lovers, as for instance the fluctuating caprices of fashion. Some of us can remember when the toy black-and-tan terrier and the "Skye" shared the ladies' favour with toy spaniels and pugs. The first is now virtually extinct, the second rarely in evidence, while the two last have taken a back seat. The "Yorkshire" again, twenty odd years ago a beautiful game little dog of, say 12 lb., is now a toy with exaggerated coat sweeping the ground. We more than share the author's apparent lack of enthusiasm for the popular and ubiquitous Pekinese with short legs, clumsy gait and often apathetic temperament. But he does full justice to the bright activities, the firm terrier-

like body, the whimsical moustachioed monkey face of the Belgian Griffon.

Captain Barton, like the rest of the public, does not seem aware that one of the later fashions owes its name and origin to Sealy ham (*sic*), a secluded country-house and estate, until recently in the occupation of the Edwarde family, near Haverfordwest, mispronounced "Sealiham" by the outside doggy public. Aberdeen too is quite a misnomer for the old Scotch terrier, which we have known all our days, as the author takes care to remind his readers. He hardly does justice to the beautiful little miniature collie from the Shetlands, little known in the south, but getting fashionable in Scotland. All the sporting dogs are treated of, but the disconnection between bench and field qualities vastly complicates the subject. The setter and pointer centre of gravity has long shifted to the United States, where they are as indispensable as the gun itself. Of retrievers and spaniels, however, still universally useful at home, the author has more to say. Likewise quite enough of the various huge carnivorous creatures, bred for tracking or intimidating men or hunting wild beasts in continental forests, that some ladies and gentlemen have a fancy for tamely towing about town streets or country lanes—or letting loose betimes to the baseless terror of pet-dog owners and the ultra-nervous generally.

A BOOK OF GARDENS

Of Gardens East and West. By K. C. Ryves. Melrose. 3s. 6d. net.

THIS is a collection of short essays contributed to the *Pioneer* by a lady quartered on the plains of India. One cannot help fancying their appeal to have been stronger when thus made by instalments to her fellow exiles than they are likely to prove in book-form to readers in this country. For the yearning note of the exile is strong throughout, while the retrospective glances at home scenes, at "Gardens West," and the memories thus invoked, are too slight and sketchy to seem much more than common-places to the fortunate who still abide among them. The fuller glimpses, for they are not much more, of Indian gardens are strongly flavoured with pessimism. Their inevitable four-square shape, commanded nowadays too frequently by modern brick villas in their centre and their unavoidable (in the Plains) flatness of surface sorely vexes the artistic soul of the authoress. But this after all is as nothing to the ephemeral nature of the gardener's ultimate achievement; three months of splendour and for the rest a depressing burnt-up waste that must be seen and endured to be fully realized. There are more attractive pictures in brief of some old Mogul gardens, where wealth could revel in all the native splendours of diaperred brick walls, mellow red or brown, in water channels of pure marble, in gorgeous displays of rose and white lotus and in "fountains playing against the dark background of watching trees." But these things are not for the officer's or civilian's wife, who has to face adverse conditions as best she may. This one is obviously an enthusiast and expert, though she pretends to no instructive detail in these pages. But she is much more than this. She has a facility of expression and neat turn of style that somehow ought to make one close her little volume with more reluctance than we can truthfully admit to. Perhaps this very gift has provoked a redundancy of words which over-load the limitations of her space with the effect of making the result seem a little thin.

THE NEW PSYCHOLOGY

The New Psychology and the Teacher. By H. Crichton Miller. Jarrold. 6s. net.

THIS is a course of lectures delivered to "educationalists." The matter is rather thin, and, if the intelligence of the audience is to be judged by the illustrative diagrams, presented to the very simple-

minded. Yet the lectures are interesting enough to awaken some curious reflections. It is difficult to follow exactly the reasoning which finds the suggestion that you are not ill when you are, wholly bad in the case of the Christian Scientist, but quite defensible in the hands of the trained psychoanalyst. At the present moment two subjects of absorbing interest are attracting the public attention and all but monopolizing the book market—the Einstein theory and the New Psychology. It is curious to compare them; both effect a complete revolution in scientific concepts of the nature of the universe, but while the Einstein theory has exclusively a theoretical interest, the scientific aspect of the New Psychology is completely hidden behind the practical possibility of its application. Everyone who takes a course in it, or attends a public lecture, has at the back of his mind a vision of the consulting-room and thumping fees. Perhaps that is why books like this merely skim the surface. One last reflection—is not dream-interpretation in danger of becoming too easy? To judge by the samples given here it is already almost reduced to a language of flowers. It looks as though in psychoanalysis everyone will soon be able to provide himself with his own *vade mecum* in the shape of a dictionary of symbols, and be as independent of the profession as those attractive little cabinets made one, which, filled with tiny bottles containing tiny pills, used, a generation ago, to adorn certain chemists' shops.

Fiction

Joan of Overbarrow. By Anthony Wharton.
Duckworth. 7s. 6d. net.

UP to a point—and one not far removed from the end of the volume—this is an exceedingly interesting, in some respects rather a remarkable, book. In particular, the years of Joan Velvin's childhood in the Vale of the White Horse are treated with a singular charm and power of observation; so that it is impossible to help regretting the unavoidable necessity of changing the scene, from time to time, from the quiet, deliberate tranquillity of Overbarrow Farm to the school at Clifton and the country gentleman's house near Bradford-on-Avon. These other chapters are very well done, but, compared to the description of the life of the fields and lonely hills, they will be commonplace to the average reader of novels. The child herself, her fat, indulgent, fussy mother, her rough, kindly father, Amy, the old, contented house-slave, the parson's family, the labourers, the neighbours, even the chickens in the yard, are all drawn with a sure hand, with drollery and with subtlety. Throughout, the women are more successfully portrayed than the men, who are studied chiefly from the outside. Their peculiarities and their actions are recorded, but the underlying motives are not very closely examined; and from this and much other evidence we may say that if Anthony Wharton is not a pen-name, at least the author has very successfully adopted the feminine point of view.

Joan was a farmer's daughter, whose parents conceived it to be their duty to give her the education of a lady. This conscientious generosity had its invariable result. Their child returned from the company of her schoolmates with a restless contempt for the limitations and uncouth manners of her own people. Her imagination dwelt constantly on the bustling luxury of Manton House, where she often spent part of her holidays; and more particularly on the boys whom she met there, whose graceful ease offered such a contrast to the inarticulate boorishness of her rustic admirers. When, her education completed, she found herself returned home, with no prospects and with no advantage achieved except a store of utter discontent with her fate, she naturally looked about for some speedy means of escape from the dull little world which had become

impossible for her. A rich marriage seemed the obvious solution of her difficulties, and she concentrated her energies on this object. Apart from her prettiness, she had no outstanding merits; a hard, selfish girl, clever without being wise, lively without being funny, vain, a good deal of a tyrant. Her character was less the result of any natural faults than of her upbringing; but she did two unpardonable things—first, when she angrily deserted the mother who had spoilt her, immediately after the father's tragic death; secondly, when she accepted the proposal of marriage and the trembling caresses of the rich brewer, Mr. James Torrington, an extremely disgusting old man, whose interest in her dated from the occasion when he had accidentally surprised her in her bath. For him she felt nothing but disgust, being, in fact, in love with his nephew, Cecil, at the time; but she cynically resolved to sell herself, as unquestionably many girls do; was loaded with money and presents, and introduced to the county as the brewer's bride elect. So far, the history of this attractive young schemer has been conducted with truth, humour, much descriptive beauty, and keen presentation of character; but thereafter it goes all to pieces. The catastrophe which robs Joan of her golden future, destroys her beauty, and leaves her the wife of a poor Scots doctor, seems to us only theatrical convention. We are pretty sure that she would not have fainted when Cecil entered her bedroom in the small hours; surer that old Torrington would never have cast off a girl about whom he was senile crazy, without giving her a chance of explaining the incident—if, indeed, he would have done so in any circumstances; and perfectly certain that, had he so dismissed her from his life, he would not have used the words put in his mouth in these pages. The quite unabashed and undisguised caddishness of Cyril, the casting forth of the heroine by her mother, her experiences in the war hospital, and the bursting of the bomb which disfigured her are too clearly only carpentry. Such things would pass muster in the ordinary artificial novel; but the author has made us believe too well in the actuality of this little group of human beings to fob us off with so neat an end of their association. One can imagine many better ways of preventing Joan's repulsive marriage and bringing her to a more decent frame of mind, and we wish that one of them had been used. But, for all that, 'Joan of Overbarrow' should not be missed by any amateur of fiction, for the greater part of it reaches a really high standard.

The Love Story of Alette Brunton. By Gilbert Frankau. Hutchinson. 7s. 6d. net.

A FOOTNOTE on the last page states that this tale was originally conceived on the Western Front in 1916; but indeed it might have been conceived anywhere, being no more than our old friend the Eternal Triangle in a moderately simple form. Whether it is a right-angled triangle will be likely to remain, as usual, a matter of opinion, the orthodox holding the one view, the heterodox the contrary; for the arguments advanced are all of a familiar type. Mrs. Brunton would have been well advised to have left her husband, the eminent barrister, so soon as she discovered his infidelities, and decided that they were unpardonable in her eyes. There were no children of the marriage, no question of destitution for herself; and it seems likely, from his subsequent behaviour, that Hector Brunton would have been willing in those days to agree to a divorce. Unfortunately she chose to remain in his house "a wife in name only," until such time as she herself fell in love with Ronald Cavendish, whom she had met casually in the hunting field. Urged to release her from her marriage bonds, her husband now refused, his jealousy being aroused by her admission of the reason of this new-born desire; and in the face of the protests not only of the two persons principally concerned and of Cavendish's mother, but also of those of his own father and relations, he maliciously

compelled the lovers to maintain an irregular union for many months before he repented, for no very clear reason, and divorced his wife just in time to make her first child legitimate. There are other incidents recorded: the destruction of the will of Cavendish's mother, the publication of which would have made the scandal public property, and a long report of a trial in which Brunton and Cavendish were briefed on opposite sides, and the latter was naturally successful, amid scenes of overwhelming enthusiasm; but these things are not actually essential to the development of the story. Although he has a few rather enervating tricks of style, such as the use of coined words and an occasional telegraphic omission of the minor parts of speech, Mr. Frankau writes with vigour, immense fluency, and a passion which is now and then only too passionate. We were not greatly attracted by the personalities of the heroine and hero; and consequently—if unjustly—we were less concerned about their troubles than we should otherwise have been; but on the whole the book, despite its generous length, held our attention well.

A Vagrant Tune. By Bryan T. Holland. Constable. 7s. 6d. net.

In these days of somewhat strident fiction, sociological, psychoanalytical and what not, it is strange and refreshing to come upon a story newly published which might have been written fifty years ago and even then would have been thought exceptionally quiet and placid. It is mostly about a maiden lady of sixty, a dear thing, gentle and kind-hearted and full of Victorian niceties and reticences. She lives in a country cottage attended by another maiden of sixty, who has lived with her for forty years and mothers and scolds and loves her. Their life together is all that really matters in the book and is in truth sweet to contemplate, as mutual trust and dependence based on affection always are. The passage which tells of the death of the servant and the grief of the mistress is moving and genuinely pathetic, without a touch of sentimentality. True to life, also, in a lighter way, are the village characters introduced. People who invade the village solitude, on the other hand, and make up such story as there is in the way of events are not so well done and belong more nearly to convention. It would be easy to make fun of such a book, with its inevitable comments and well-tried philosophy, sometimes enforced by notes of exclamation, but only a brute would have the heart to do so. He would also be a fool, for new philosophies are cheap and old feelings are precious. The book gently breathes the spirit of a pleasant backwater, and we say good-bye to it with regret.

The Miracles of Clara van Haag. By Johannes Buchholtz. Translated by W. Worster. Gylleldal. 8s. 6d. net.

To describe Johannes Buchholtz as a Scandinavian Dickens is, we believe, the correct thing in criticism, and for our part we find this a grateful and comforting formula. For if his characters have the same relation to real life as those of Dickens, we may feel relieved from a certain misgiving with regard to Scandinavia's, or to be more accurate, Denmark's sanity. And certainly he so far resembles Dickens that these men and women of his, queer as they are, do interest and sometimes attract us. They have undeniably nice qualities, as well as others not quite so nice. We cannot, for example, understand why Clara van Haag should have chosen an utterly contemptible and even repulsive husband, and as a wife her conduct leaves something to be desired. Yet to everyone else she is splendidly sympathetic and generous, and her benefactions are seasoned with a delicate whimsicality which makes it impossible not to like her. We cannot say the same for her sometime admirer, Kasper Egholm, photographer and

mystic. Like his daughter Heding, we strongly incline to pronounce him a brute. Whether she is right in considering him also a humbug is a delicate question, which—*we* may observe in passing—Dickens would never have entertained. Under his hands Egholm would certainly have developed into a full-blown hypocrite. Of the remaining *dramatis persona* Heding, above-mentioned, is the most respectable, while her brother Sivert touches mentally the level of deficiency, unredeemed by any moral worth in particular. The social relations of a little Danish town, where the postmaster and custom-house official are important personages, and associate on terms of some condescension with the fancy draper and his family, are described with a humour which amongst other elements carries an odd reminiscence of Ibsen. The thread of the story is rather difficult to pick up, probably because this volume is only the second of a series. The translator's English reads pleasantly.

The Library Table

The Bulletin of the John Rylands Library (Longmans, 2s. net) is, as usual, full of valuable contributions. Prof. Conway's lecture on 'The Philosophy of Vergil,' without containing anything that is absolutely new—a thing to be unhoisted for after twenty centuries of readers—brings out in a fresh light much of his charm, his antithetic dramatic turn of mind, his affection for human kind. Prof. Edmund Gardner writes on 'Autobiography in the Divina Commedia,' tracing the personal element either as defending oneself or as affording instruction to others, to use Dante's own classification. Prof. Tout has a very interesting paper on 'The Study of Mediaeval Chronicles,' in which he gives us a considered judgment on the value as history of most of the English writers. Dr. Rendel Harris writes of the 'Stoic Origins of the Prologue to St. John's Gospel' with his usual ingenuity and wide knowledge of his literature. Prof. Powicke continues his account of Aildred of Rievaulx, who died in the middle of the twelfth century, and gives us a revised text of his life by Walter Daniel. The number closes with an interesting bit of folk-lore.

The Geographical Journal contains the papers by Col. Howard-Bury, and by Mr. G. L. Mallory on the Mount Everest expedition, and the preliminary reconnaissance. They are full of interest and abundantly illustrated by photographs and a map. The other paper is one by Sir Aurel Stein on 'A Chinese Expedition across the Pamirs and Hindukush, A.D. 747,' when an army of over ten thousand was brought from China into Turkestan. The lecturer's knowledge of the glacier passes through which it came enables him to appreciate the wonder of this achievement.

Psyche contains two papers of a somewhat wider appeal than usual. Dr. Wate writes on 'Music as pure Psychics,' and Messrs. Ogden and Wood on 'The Analogy of Sound and Colour.' Both papers will be read by the partisans of "pure" music with interest and pleasure. Mr. Burt writes on 'The Causes and Treatment of Juvenile Delinquency.'

Essays on the Latin Orient, by William Miller (Cambridge University Press, 40s. net), consists of papers on the history of Greece from Byzantine times to the beginning of the eighteenth century, together with some essays on other points of Balkan history. Few living have done as much as Mr. Miller to elucidate the mediaeval history of what is now the kingdom of Greece, and none have come near him in bringing it home to English-speaking peoples. Even now only a small minority of us know anything about the time when, emulating the Norman Conquest of Sicily and South Italy, a handful of adventurers from Burgundy carved out for themselves principalities and dukedoms in Greece, and there were Dukes of Athens and of Naxos, and Princes of the Peloponnese. Mr. Miller tells their story at length, though soberly—only hinting at episodes which in less critical hands would furnish forth the setting of the wildest romance. We wish we could persuade him to investigate and finally settle the truth of the story told by Archdeacon John of Basingstoke to Matthew Paris of the learned Constantina, daughter of the Archbishop of Athens, who before she was twenty years old could predict eclipses and earthquakes, and taught him more than all he had learned at Oxford and Paris. After the French came the Venetians and, contemporary with them, their rivals in trade and enemies, the Genoese. Then comes in the rule of the Turks, and lastly the revival of Venetian influence in Greece, of which we get a faint echo in the memoirs of Casanova. All this is ably and soberly written, with abundant reference to documents and printed authorities, elucidated by reference to the existing remains of buildings by these departed rulers. The work is a solid contribution to learning which should be in every historical library, and a worthy successor to 'The Latins in the Levant.'

China Captive or Free? by the Rev. Gilbert Reid (Allen and Unwin, 12s. 6d.). With the sub-title of 'A Study of China's Entanglements,' which gives some idea of its scope, this book has as its author Dr. Reid, Director of the International Insti-

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Recent Publications

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THE CRAFT OF FICTION by Percy Lubbock. 2nd impression. "No more substantial or more charming volume of criticism has been published in our time." J. C. Squire in *The Observer*. 9s. net

MR. PAUL. A Story of the countryside, by Gertrude Bone, the woodcuts by Stephen Bone. 750 copies only for sale. "Quite delightfully presented in all the details proper to book production.—*The Saturday Review*. 12s. 6d. net

"Now & Then," a Periodical of Books and Personalities. A copy of the current issue will be sent post free for 4d.

Jonathan Cape, Eleven Gower Street London

tute of China. He has lived in that country for forty years, speaks and writes Chinese, edits a paper in Peking, and is well acquainted with most of the leading men of the Republic. What he has to say is therefore informative and important. But his point of view has to be noted. In his preface he states that though he is of American birth he is pro-Chinese rather than pro-American, and throughout this work he presents very strongly the case for China, not only as against Japan, but as against all nations with which she has become politically "entangled." He describes the ruthlessness of the treatment she has received owing to her weakness. He expresses the opinion—which will be new to most people—that her entrance into the Great War did her far more harm than good, and is largely responsible for her present distracted condition. He answers the question posed in the title by maintaining that China must be left to work out her own salvation as far as is possible in face of the actual facts of the situation. Like several books of American origin on China which we have recently noticed, this work was written before the Washington Conference, and some of its conclusions may have to be revised.

The *New China Review* of Shanghai which has reached us contains, among other articles, an account of the Mexican dollars in trade use in China, some 'Chinese Ditties,' translated and explained by E. T. C. Werner, not like the etiolated specimens so popular among us, and a valuable note on 'The Lunar Zodiac' with its twenty-eight houses, which will be useful to mediæval students.

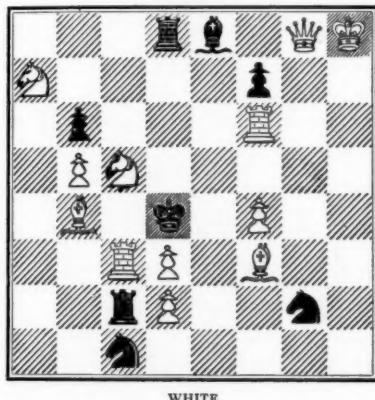
The *Sociological Review* is a very good number, its best articles being a study of the relations of 'Body, Mind and Spirit,' a very fair-minded survey of 'The Successors of Austro-Hungary' by Dr. Seton-Watson, and a thoughtful scheme setting forth the various stages of 'The Life of Civilization' by Mr. Christopher Dawson.

Chess

PROBLEM No. 16

By H. JONSSON

BLACK



White to play and mate in two moves.

Solutions should be addressed to the Chess Editor of the SATURDAY REVIEW, and reach him before March 4.

PROBLEM No. 15

Solution.

WHITE :

(1) Q—KR4.

(2) Mates accordingly.

BLACK :

Any move.

PROBLEM No. 14.—Correct from A. Lewis, E. J. Davies, Albert Taylor, A. S. Brown, A. S. Mitchell, C. O. Grimshaw, and W. C. Jesper.

To Correspondents.

R. BLACK AND J. V. DEWHURST.—In No. 14 (1) KtK2 and BQ3 are met by R-KK6.

E. N. (Leicester).—Thank you for neat little verse; see, however, reply to R. Black above.

REV. S. W. SUTTON.—In No. 14, P-R3 is met by KR x P pinning the Queen; and R-Q 2nd ch. by K-B8.

G. V. NIXON-SMITH.—R x P ch. would be one reply to your (1) Q-B4, in No. 14.

SIR E. ELLIOT.—There is no "cook" in No. 13. The Bishop covers the R check at K3, giving check in so doing.

W. C. JESPER.—You say, "There is something the matter either with me or the problem (No. 14): which is it?" Well, we hope it is not with *you* and, as to the problem, this is what Alain C. White, the finest living judge of chess problems, says: "The key has always seemed to me the most startling in all two-move literature." Those of our solvers who have tumbled over this very clever bit of work may clearly congratulate you upon your instantaneous success with it. (Of course it is quite true that in these days any two-mover can offer but little difficulty to an expert).

ODDS-GIVING.—II.

It is more difficult to give time than material at chess—many a strong player can with more success concede the Kt at the start than the KB pawn and two moves, because, in the former case he can form his attack as he wishes, while the two moves against him in the other case take a tremendous measure of indomitable patience as well as unflagging care to surmount. In the matter of "pawn and two," the receiver will find the two moves P-K4, Kt-KB3 far and away his best start. The odds-giver knows at once that he has a tough customer when he sees that the latter is not going, as in the old time, to stake his chances of victory upon any illusory scheme of which Q-R5 (check or not, as may be) forms an integral part. To the giver of the odds we say: Bring your man down to R5—entice him there—as soon as possible; and, if you do not then soon get him into a hopeless mess, you had better not offer him the odds again; and to the receiver of the odds we would say: Leave severely alone all the allurements of the Q-R5 attack, and just develop quickly and quietly; your antagonist will then soon be sighing for his missing pawn.

Books Received

ESSAYS AND BELLES LETTRES

- A Faith that Enquires.** By Sir Henry Jones. Gifford Lectures 1920-1921. Macmillan : 18s. net.
Christianity and Patriotism. By L. N. Tolstoy. Translated by Constance Garnett. Cape : 5s. net.
Eugenics and Other Evils. By G. K. Chesterton. Cassell : 6s. net.
Ingenuous Voices. By Joseph Lucas. Fisher Unwin : 6s. net.
The Organization of a Britannic Partnership. By R. A. Eastwood. Longmans : 7s. 6d. net.

HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY

- A Short History of Our Religion.** By D. C. Somervell. Bell : 6s. net.
The Pastons and Their England. By H. S. Bennett. Cambridge University Press : 15s. net.

VERSE

- Out of My Keeping and A Character.** By R. Brimley Johnson. Allen & Unwin : 1s. net.

ECONOMICS

- Incentives in the New Industrial Order.** By J. A. Hobson. Parsons : 4s. 6d. net.

- The International Protection of Labour.** By Boutelle Ellsworth Lowe. Macmillan : 12s. 6d. net.
The Problem of the War and Its Solution. By John E. Grant. Allen & Unwin : 12s. 6d. net.

THEOLOGY

- Blasphemy. A Plea for Religious Equality.** By Chapman Cohen. Pioneer Press : 3d. net.

- Confirmation.** By the Rev. M. Tron. Skeffington : 6d. net.
Presentations of Christianity. By the Rev. J. E. Roscoe. Skeffington : 1s. net.

- The Deity of Christ.** By Charles Gore. Mowbray : 2s. 6d. net.
The Glory of Redemption. By the Rev. H. W. Workman. Skeffington : 3s. 6d. net.

- The Meaning of the Cross.** By Edward Grubb. Allen & Unwin : 5s. net.

- Why Should I go to Church?** By the Rev. M. Tron. Skeffington : 4d. net.

FICTION

- Black Beauty.** By Anna Sewell. New Edition. Jarrold : 1s. 6d. net.

- David Copperfield.** By Charles Dickens. With Critical Appraisals Old and New. The Readers' Classics. Edited by G. K. Chesterton, Holbrook Jackson and Brimley Johnson. Bath, Chivers.

- Dead Reckoning.** By Eric Leadbitter. Allen & Unwin : 7s. 6d. net.

- The History of Alfred Rudd.** By E. V. Odle. Collins : 7s. 6d. net.

- The Jewel in the Lotus.** By Rosita Forbes. Cassell : 7s. 6d. net.

- The Prisoners of Hartling.** By J. D. Beresford. Collins : 7s. 6d. net.

- The Tent of Blue.** By Lady Dorothy Mills. Duckworth : 7s. 6d. net.

MISCELLANEOUS

- An Introduction to Ecclesiastical Latin.** By H. P. V. Nunn. Cambridge University Press : 6s. net.

- Burlesques.** By H. M. Bateman. Revised Edition. Duckworth : 5s. net.

- City Homes on Country Lanes.** By William E. Smythe. Macmillan : 13s. net.

- Cripplegate.** One of the Twenty-six Wards of the City of London. By Sir John James Baddeley, Lord Mayor of London. Printed for Private Circulation.

- Debrett's Royal Wedding Book.** Dean : 2s. net.

- Efficient Church Finance.** Compiled by the International Business Men's Committee on Church Finance. Garrood : 5s. net.

Grotius Society Transactions. Vol. VII. Problems of Peace and War. Sweet & Maxwell: 8s. 6d. net.
Sortes Vergilianae, or Vergil and To-day. By D. A. Slater. Oxford, Blackwell: 2s. net.
The Dual Mandate in British Tropical Africa. By Sir F. D. Lugard. Edinburgh, Blackwood: 42s. net.
The Friendly Arctic. The Story of Five Years in Polar Regions. By Vilhjalmur Stefansson. Macmillan: 30s. net.
The General Eyre. By William Craddock Bolland. Cambridge University Press: 6s. net.
Under the Searchlight. The Record of a Great Scandal. By Violet Douglas Pennant. Allen & Unwin: 12s. 6d. net.

A Library List

The following books are suggested to those making up their library lists. An asterisk against a title denotes that it is fiction.

Alarms and Excursions. By James Agate. Grant Richards. Alone. By Norman Douglas. Chapman & Hall.
A Revision of the Treaty. By J. M. Keynes. Macmillan.
Belief in God. By Charles Gore. Murray.
***Crome Yellow.** By Aldous Huxley. Chatto & Windus.
Essays and Addresses. By Gilbert Murray. Allen & Unwin.
***Greensea Island.** By Victor Bridges. Mills & Boon.
***Guinea Girl.** By Norman Davey. Chapman & Hall.
***Jürgen.** By J. B. Cabell. Lane.
Last Days in New Guinea. By C. A. W. Moncton. The Bodley Head.
Lord Byron's Correspondence. Edited by John Murray. Murray.
Painted Windows. By "A Gentleman with a Duster." Mills & Boon.
Peaceless Europe. By Francesco Nitti. Cassell.
***Search.** By Margaret Rivers Larminie. Chatto & Windus.
South. By Sir Ernest Shackleton. Heinemann.
Ten Years at the Court of St. James. By Baron von Eckardstein. Butterworth.
The Pleasures of Ignorance. By Robert Lynd. Grant Richards.
The Riddle of the Rhine. By Victor Lefebure. Collins.
The Secrets of a Savoyard. Henry A. Lytton. Jarrold.
***Wanderers.** By Knut Hamsun. Gyldendal.
With the Battle Cruisers. By Filson Young. Cassell.
***Youth and the Bright Medusa.** By Willa Cather. Heinemann.

Company Meeting

BOVRIL LIMITED.

PRESIDING AT THE TWENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of Bovril, Limited, held at River Plate House, E.C., on the 16th inst., Sir George Lawson Johnston (Chairman) said the directors were glad to be able to meet the shareholders with such a satisfactory set of accounts. The sales of Bovril in 1921 had been larger than in any previous year, and both the gross profit and the net profit had surpassed all previous records.

It was not, perhaps, surprising that the home sales of Bovril continued to grow, but it might surprise some people to learn, in view of the difficulties hampering export trade generally, that the company's export business in 1921 had also surpassed all previous records, and, further, that the export sales for the first seven weeks of this year nearly equalled those for the first four months of last year.

He had heard it suggested that last year's record sales in England were due to influenza, as people would not risk being short of Bovril when that scourge was about. He accepted the second part of that suggestion, which emphasised the unique position Bovril had attained in connection with influenza, but pointed out that the sales were well ahead in November, before influenza had got a footing at all.

The real "influenza sales" had come in January, when the demand had become so great that the factory could not keep pace with it, and the directors, finding the shops had run practically out of stock, thought it right towards the end of January to issue an advertisement in the following terms:—

"Those who have a supply of Bovril are requested to refrain from buying more Bovril this week. Many shops have already sold right out, and it is important that in times of influenza Bovril should be evenly distributed."

Supplies were, however, now again available.

To permit pessimism to get hold of one was, Sir George considered, fatal, especially in the case of influenza. A cheerful and moderately optimistic spirit was a wonderful safeguard, and it was the best panacea for many of the world's difficulties. Shareholders would have noticed the cheery fellow who, in the company's latest poster, was shown buoyed up in mid-ocean by a bottle of Bovril, with the accompanying legend, "Bovril prevents that sinking feeling." He had seen him in a dozen towns across Canada last October, and his smiling face had appeared in the papers or on the hoardings throughout the Empire. There had never been a time when a little humour and optimism were of more value than to-day. He concluded by moving the adoption of the report and accounts.

The motion, having been duly seconded, was agreed to, and the proceedings terminated with a vote of thanks to the Chairman and Directors.

It is impossible to exaggerate the horror of THE TRUTH ABOUT RUSSIA!

Miss Ruth Fry, General Secretary to the Friends' Relief Committee, has just returned from the famine area, and can speak from personal knowledge of the need for immediate action. Her report will be sent to anybody who applies for it at 27 Chancery Lane, London, W.C.2. The fact that stands out is that of the 19,000,000 people who are in danger of starvation.

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if help is sent at once. 15/- will save a life until the next harvest—if it is sent without delay.

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Send your subscriptions, clearly earmarked "**Friends' Relief Committee (for Russia)**" to the Russian Famine Relief Fund, Room 46, General Buildings, Aldwych, London, W.C.2.

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